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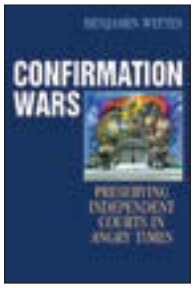

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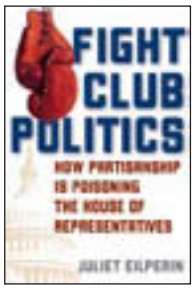

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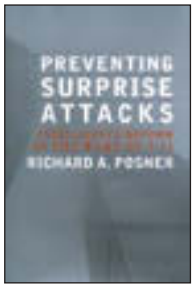

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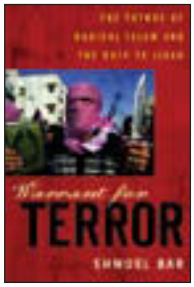

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Contents

February 12, 2007 • Volume 12, Number 21

2 Scrapbook . . . . . *Jane Fonda, Chris Matthews, and more.*

4 Casual . . . . . *Richard Starr, password hater.*

7 Editorial . . . . . *A Terrible Ignominy*

Articles

8 Irresolution *The congressional Democrats' misstep.* . . . . . BY NOEMIE EMERY

11 A Moderate Failure *It wasn't for want of conservatives that the GOP lost in 2006.* . . . . . BY FRED BARNES

12 Not Too Late to Curb Dear Leader *By pressuring China.* . . . . . BY DAN BLUMENTHAL & AARON FRIEDBERG

15 Mr. Sali Goes to Washington *Another maverick from Idaho's First.* . . . . . BY JAMIE WEINSTEIN

16 Terminate This Plan *The shortcomings of Schwarzenegger's health care reform.* . . . . . BY JOHN GOODMAN

Features

19 The Treaty of the Democratic Peace
What the world needs now. . . . . . BY TOD LINDBERG

Cover: ConcordMonitor / Tim Lytvinenko

Books & Arts

25 The Literary Obama
From eloquent memoir to Democratic boilerplate. . . . . . BY ANDREW FERGUSON

29 Old Possum Renewed
Craig Raine's appreciation of Eliot's life and work. . . . . . BY EDWARD SHORT

31 Red Alert
A Blue journalist misunderstands America. . . . . . BY GERARD ALEXANDER

33 Evil's Autopsy
A philosopher looks back at the 20th-century utopias. . . . . . BY PAUL HOLLANDER

35 Revolts of the Masses
Revolutions make history, and vice versa. . . . . . BY DAVID AIKMAN

36 Gentleman at Arms
What the South and North can learn from General Robert E. Lee. . . . . . BY EDWIN M. YODER JR.

38 Keaton on Film
A 'vivid performer' and versatile actress. . . . . . BY JOHN PODHORETZ

40 Parody . . . . . *Supreme Court Calendar.*

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BPA INTERNATIONAL

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The Sounds of Jane Fonda's Silence

The Scrapbook never turns down a seat in the front row of history, and last week was no exception. There was a modest antiwar rally on the Mall in Washington—modest by Vietnam-era standards, that is, with about 10,000 people. But around lunchtime, when The Scrapbook arrived with reporter's pad in hand, the Mall was largely empty.

Of course, the *Washington Post* found the glass half-full, as it were. "Thousands Protest Bush Policy" screamed a front-page headline the next morning, while the story took delight in "a raucous and colorful multitude of protesters" who, "under a blue sky with a pale midday moon . . . danced, sang, shouted and chanted their opposition," and "came from across the country and across the activist spectrum, with a wide array of grievances."

There was the usual prose poem about winsome senior citizens taking the train down from New York, bearded veterans, "civil rights and community activist" Jesse Jackson, young couples with babies, smiling students, "children in tie-dyed shirts, grandmothers in flowered hats, kids with frizzy hair and muddy jeans," and assorted Hollywood leftists. All rather different in tone, as you might suspect, from coverage of the annual Right-to-Life march on Washington.

Our attention was drawn, however, to the appearance of none other than Jane Fonda on the speaker's platform. The *Post* was similarly intrigued, but seemed content—and curiously credulous—to view Miss Fonda entirely uncritically. The passive voice got a good workout in the Style section depiction of her. Describing a 1972 photograph of a helmeted Jane Fonda sitting happily atop a North Vietnamese antiaircraft gun—aimed at you-know-whose aircraft—the *Post* explained that this appalling spectacle "was viewed by many as sympathetic to North Vietnam."

Then there was her assertion "I haven't spoken at an antiwar rally in 34 years. Silence is no longer an option." Unlike the *Post*, which accepted this as gospel, and reported that Miss Fonda had been otherwise engaged in the intervening decades, The Scrapbook was struck by the precision of her memory. Thirty-four years would take us back to the winter of 1972-73, when she and actor Donald Sutherland, songbird Holly Near, and others were finishing the worldwide tour of their "F.T.A. [F—the Army] Show"—"a satirical revue . . . [featuring] protest songs, anti-war humor . . . and agit-prop theater designed to increase awareness and spread resistance" (the *New York Times*)—on college campuses, at coffeehouses, and outside U.S. military bases here and in Japan, the Philippines, and Okinawa.

Indeed, The Scrapbook is just old enough to remember that, during those locust years when Jane Fonda (in the words of the *Post*) was "a workout maven, postfeminist arm candy for billionaire media magnate Ted Turner, a vocal Christian and an autobiographer," she was also, with second husband Tom Hayden in their spacious L.A. residence, host to a parade of strongmen from Nicaragua's Sandinista regime, as well as visiting officials of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, the Communist guerrilla army seeking to destroy the democratically elected government of El Salvador.

Jane Fonda may not have spoken at rallies during that time, but silence was never an option when she could lend her voice to the enemies of her country. ♦

His Dream Job?

Chris Matthews, the host of MSNBC's *Hardball* and the syndicated *Chris Matthews Show*, was in Vegas recently, among the judges at the 2007 Miss America pageant. (No, this is not a joke.) As a judge, Matthews took part in the question and answer session with pageant contestants. Your typical Miss America Q&A, we are told, involves banalities like "If you were Miss America, how would you combat global hunger?" and "How do you make every day special and unique?" That is not the approach Matthews took, according to a recent item in the *D.C. Examiner*. His line of questioning eschewed banality for absurdity. A small sample:

- "Why can't [Oprah] find a guy?"
- "Faulkner never used commas when he wrote. Why is that?"
- In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, "why did Mississippi seem to do a better job" rebuilding than Louisiana?

Matthews, the *Examiner* continues, also asked Kate Michael, aka Miss District of Columbia, where Osama bin Laden is hiding. That portion of the Q&A never aired on television, but we can only imagine that Michael's initial reaction was a mixture of shock, befuddlement, and bemusement—which, come to think of it, is a lot like the reactions of many guests on Matthews's shows. ♦

NY Times ♥ Iran

Wonder what prize the *New York Times* will win for that astonishing lead editorial in last Thursday's paper: "Bullying Iran"? In case you're trying to guess, the "bully" is George W. Bush. Complains the *Times*: "Mr. Bush is at it again, this time trying to bully Iran into stopping its meddling inside Iraq."

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What the *Times* calls "meddling" is Iranian agents helping Iraqi insurgents kill American soldiers. What the *Times* calls "bullying" is Americans fighting back. We nominate the *Times* editorialists for the Robert Frost Prize in pathetic liberalism. Frost, of course, defined a liberal as someone so broadminded he won't take his own side in a fight.

Meanwhile, in other West 43rd Street developments, the *Times* is in favor of bullying its reporters, when they display dangerously deviationist views on the Great Bush Terror. Reporter Michael Gordon, the *Times*'s chief military correspondent, appearing recently on the *Charlie Rose* show, let slip that he secretly hopes the war goes well for America: "As a purely personal view," said Gordon, "I think [the Bush surge is] worth it—one last effort for sure to try to get this right, because my personal view is we've never really tried to win. We've simply been managing our way to defeat. And I think that if it's done right, I think that there is the chance to accomplish something."

According to the paper's Washington bureau chief, Philip Taubman, Gordon "stepped over the line" and "went too far." *Times* readers can relax; dissent in the ranks has been quelled. ♦

Turning Right

For that bookshelf groaning under the distinguished works of our contributors, we commend a new volume, *Why I Turned Right: Leading Baby Boom Conservatives Chronicle Their Political Journeys*, edited by Mary Eberstadt and featuring a number of names that will be familiar to readers. Among them are this magazine's deputy editor, Richard Starr, and contributing editors Joseph Bottum, Tod Lindberg, and P.J. O'Rourke.

The book has already been attacked as "facile" in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (or, as we like to think of it, the *National Enquirer* of the faculty lounge). But the reviewer, though hostile, was a bit envious: "Almost without exception, each essay is lucid and articulate. Would it be possible to assemble a countercollection by leftists that would be equally limpid? Unlikely. . . . Compared to [your typical leftist scholar], much conservative writing has a deft, light touch." Believe the man. ♦

Breindel Awards

Applications are invited for the Eric Breindel Award for Excellence in Journalism. The $20,000 prize is named for longtime *New York Post* editor and columnist (and Weekly Standard contributor) Eric Breindel, who died in 1998. It is presented each year to the columnist, editorialist, or reporter whose work best reflects the spirit of Breindel's too-short career: love of country, concern for the preservation and integrity of democratic institutions, and resistance to the evils of totalitarianism. Submissions are also welcome for the second annual $10,000 collegiate award for the undergraduate whose journalistic work best reflects the themes that animated Breindel's writing. For further information about both awards, contact Germaine Febles at 212-843-8031 or *gfebles@rubenstein.com*. ♦

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Casual

For My Own Protection

I'm a reasonable man, and I take reasonable precautions to secure my property. This means keeping a lock on all the doors of my house, hiding the spare key somewhere other than under the doormat, and peeking out through the Venetian blinds to see what's stirring when the dog barks in the middle of the night. I don't go for multiple locks and chains on the front door, fancy electronic alarms, or grabbing the .12-gauge for a stroll around the neighborhood whenever the dog's ear twitches. Not that there's anything wrong with those who err on the side of vigilance: On how to strike a proper balance in these things reasonable men may differ.

When it comes to my virtual property on the Internet, I would be delighted to take a similarly relaxed approach, if only I could. One of my goals in life is to have no electronic secrets worth cracking. My favorite password, when I can get away with it, is "password." My email archives are an open book—a tedious, incomprehensibly boring book, in fact, and nothing that would cause me to lose a minute of sleep were an antagonist to steal my laptop and hand it over to Matt Drudge.

My financial accounts are similarly, monotonously dull. One of my brokerage accounts *is* slightly embarrassing: It has a total value of 12 cents ($0.12) that it has maintained for the last three or four years—the residual value of 126 shares of stock in one of those bankrupt Internet high-flyers. Some days, when the market tanks, it subsides to 11.9 cents. And when the bulls are running, it has been known to climb as high as 12 and a half cents. It would make a neat story to say that I keep this account open as a stern reminder to myself that there's a reason I work in Washington and not on Wall Street. Truth is, I can't remember the security password to liquidate the thing. And I'm not about to spend 30 minutes navigating the brokerage firm's voicemail labyrinth to obtain a new one.

Believe me, I've tried all my favorites—"password," "password1" (in case they required a number), "pssword" (in case there was a limit of six characters), not to mention my really clever ones that no one will ever guess, "Starr1" and "Starr2." No dice.

Alas, I find myself forgetting more and more passwords these days. My memory is fine, by the way. It's the passwords that got complicated. As I say, I'm a reasonable man. I can understand that a brokerage firm wants to take precautions. After all, what if I were to hang out at one of the public library computers, day-trading online alongside all the homeless men? If I absent-mindedly walked away without logging off, a good password system would keep my fellow investors from emptying the account and using the purloined funds to buy a swizzle stick at Starbucks.

But what explains all the other websites now making deeply unreasonable password demands? My credit card company must think the CIA is after me. Every month they come up with a new security scheme. It's not as if my mother's maiden name has recently been in the news. As far as that goes, what's the worst thing that would happen if someone *were* to break into my online credit card statements? God forbid they should pay off this month's balance for me.

No matter: My mother's maiden name is no longer good enough for Citibank. They insist that I also make up answers to three password challenge questions chosen from their list. And that's not the worst of it: They seem to have convened a focus group of 10-year-olds to come up with the questions. Here's one of their possible challenges: "What's your favorite color?" My answer: I don't have one. Here's another: "What is your best friend's name?" I don't have one of those, either. Or how about this: "What's the name of your first pet?" Well, that would be the turtle we wrapped in Kleenex, put into a metal Band-Aid box, and buried in the back yard with a full color-guard/casket detail. And no, I don't remember the turtle's name.

You know, if the Bush administration had contracted out the war on terror to Citibank's credit-card security consultants, the *New York Times* would never, ever have figured out what was going on. I finally settled on the only three questions that had non-ambiguous answers. What is your favorite cartoon character? What was the last name of your first grade teacher? What is your oldest sibling's nickname?

The answers are Underdog, Mrs. Carney, and Bill. Those are for my benefit, not yours. Now when I need to access my credit card records, I'll at least have this permanent, printed record of the passwords to refer back to.

Richard Starr

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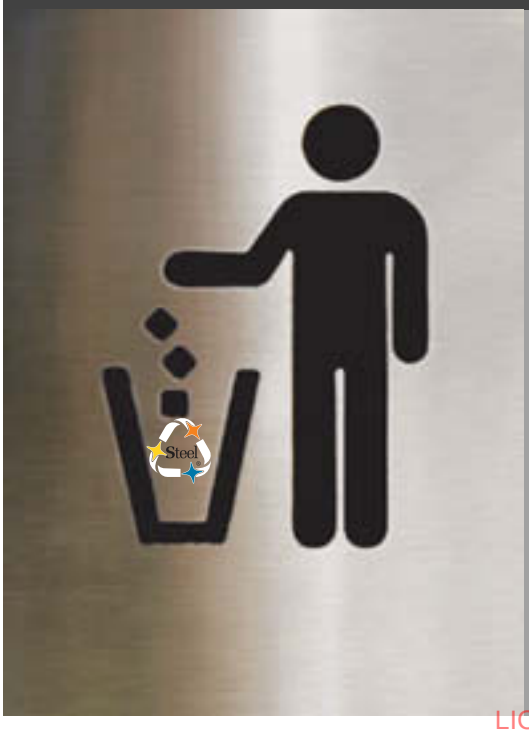
THE CLEAN LITTLE SECRET



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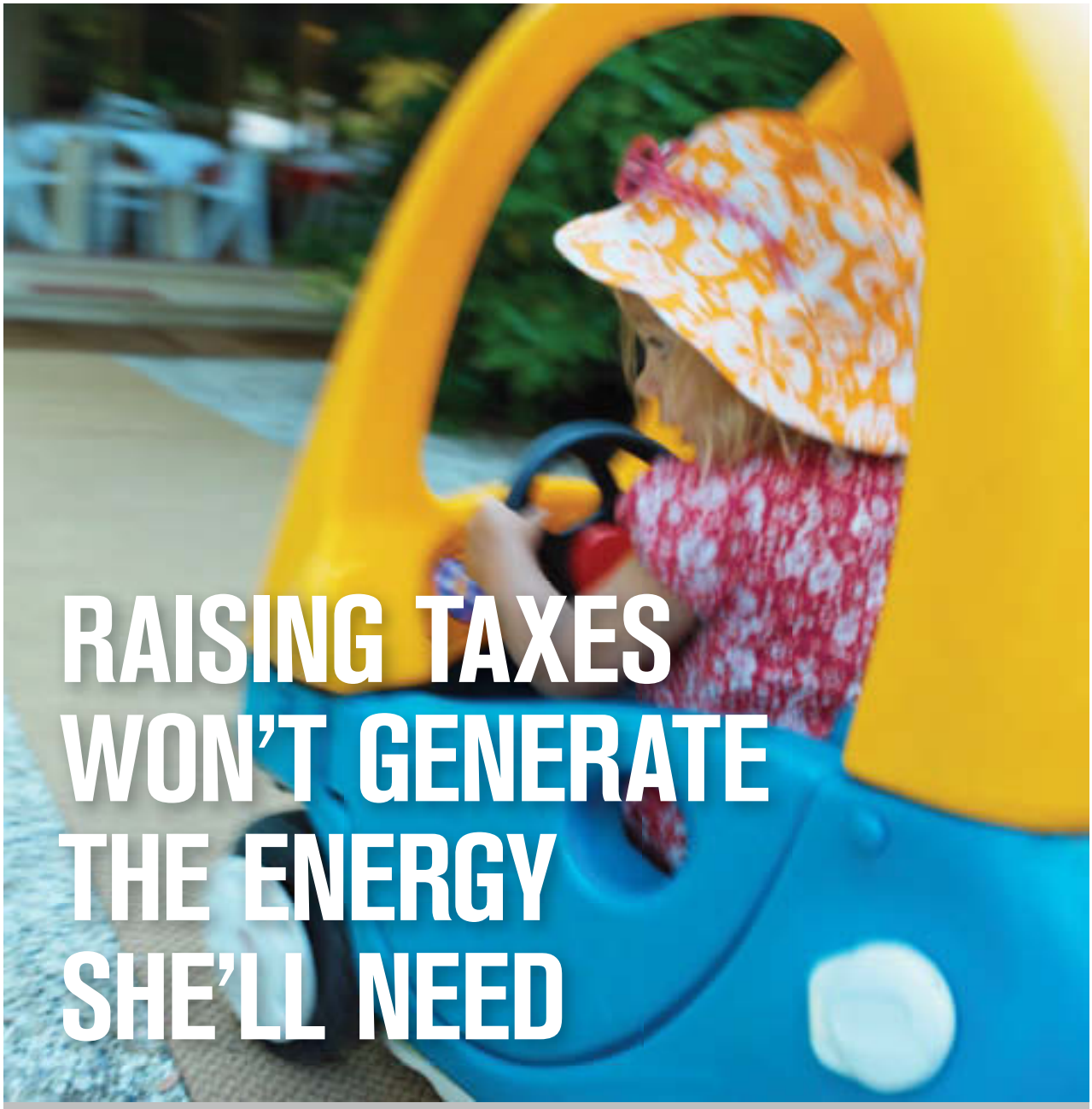

RAISING TAXES WON'T GENERATE THE ENERGY SHE'LL NEED

Most Americans agree energy security is a top national priority, because they want to ensure their families' quality of life now and into the future. So why do some in Congress want to raise taxes on the development of oil and natural gas resources?

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America's Oil & Natural Gas Industry

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A Terrible Ignominy

Perhaps the shade of the great Yeats will forgive me:

I write it out in a verse—
Warner and Smith
And Collins and Snowe
Now and in time to be,
Wherever Reagan is remembered,
Are changed, changed utterly:
A terrible ignominy is born.

John Warner of Virginia, Gordon Smith of Oregon, and Susan Collins and Olympia Snowe of Maine are the four Republican senators (in addition to Nebraska's Chuck Hagel) currently signed on to the Democrats' anti-surge, anti-Petraeus, anti-troops, and anti-victory resolution. (I give Hagel a pass—perhaps undeserved—in my roster of ignominy, since he has been a harsh critic of the war for quite some time.) Three of the four are up for reelection in 2008—Warner, Collins, and Smith. Collins and Smith will be running in states Bush lost in 2004. Warner will be standing in a state where an antiwar Democrat won in 2006.

Now, politicians are entitled to be concerned about their political survival. They're even entitled to make foolish and shortsighted political judgments—for example, that voting for this resolution in February 2007 will help their electoral prospects if the Bush administration's foreign policy is in shambles in November 2008. Indeed, they're entitled to ignore the fact that voting for this resolution somewhat increases the chances of a shambolic outcome to Bush's foreign policy, and therefore may not be in their own interest.

But of course these senators won't acknowledge they're influenced by the electoral cycle. Consider John Warner. Is he worried about 2008? No. It's memories of Vietnam that suddenly haunt him. As the *Washington Post* reported on its front page recently:

> "I regret that I was not more outspoken" during the Vietnam War, the former Navy secretary said in an interview in his Capitol Hill office. "The Army generals would come in, 'Just send in another five or ten thousand.' You know, month after month. Another ten or fifteen thousand. They thought they could win it. We kept surging in those years. It didn't work."

In fact, John Warner was Richard Nixon's undersecretary of the Navy from 1969 to 1972, then Navy secretary until 1974. No admiral (or Army general) showed up in either his undersecretarial or secretarial office in those years to urge more troops for Vietnam—because we were then drawing down as part of Vietnamization. So Warner would seem to be making up these conversations with foolishly optimistic Army generals—unless they visited him before 1969 in his office at the law firm of Hogan and Hartson, where he was ensconced during the period of the Vietnam buildup.

I presume Smith, Collins, and Snowe aren't rewriting history to justify their votes to disapprove of Bush's new effort in Iraq. Still, we have yet to hear a coherent explanation of their position: They are (understandably) unhappy with how Bush has prosecuted the war over the last couple of years, under the guidance of Rumsfeld, Abizaid, and Casey. So they now are supporting a resolution that precisely embodies the Rumsfeld-Abizaid-Casey approach: no new strategy, no more troops, and continuing pressure to turn things over to the Iraqis as quickly as possible. These senators dislike the status quo in Iraq—and are supporting a resolution that condemns Bush's attempt to change the status quo.

Some seven GOP senators are said to be wavering between the Democratic resolution and the McCain-Graham-Lieberman alternative supporting Gen. Petraeus and the troops. They are Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, Sam Brownback of Kansas, Norm Coleman of Minnesota, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, John Sununu of New Hampshire, and George Voinovich of Ohio. Alexander, Coleman, and Sununu are up for reelection in 2008. Some or all of the seven may still choose to stand with the president and the troops, and to give Petraeus a chance. This would leave the Democratic resolution short of the 60 votes needed to end debate. Perhaps the four ignominious ones could even reconsider and sign on with McCain, Graham, and Lieberman (whose resolution of support includes, incidentally, "benchmarks" of performance that the Iraqi government is expected to meet).

In any case, Republican senators up for reelection in 2008 might remember this: The American political system has primaries as well as general elections. In 1978 and 1980, as Reagan conservatives took over the party from détente-establishment types, Reaganite challengers ousted incumbent GOP senators in New Jersey and New York. Surely there are victory-oriented Republicans who might step forward today in Nebraska, Virginia, Oregon, and Maine—and, if necessary, in Tennessee, Minnesota, and New Hampshire—to seek to vindicate the honor, and brighten the future, of the party of Reagan.

—*William Kristol*

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Irresolution

The congressional Democrats' misstep.

BY NOEMIE EMERY

Giddy with joy at their sudden good fortune, the Democrats have set out to embarrass the president, pushing resolutions of less-than-no-confidence, clubbing his Iraq surge plan as it lies in its cradle, and declaring defeat in advance. In some sense, they have achieved their objectives: They have embarrassed Bush, exposed his weakness, and won over a cadre of frightened Republicans. But they have also painted themselves into a number of corners, from which they may find it hard to escape.

If Iraq is stabilized this side of chaos, the congressional Democrats will be remembered as the people who fought to prevent it, who tried to kneecap the commander and demoralize the armed forces, and all in all make the mission more difficult. If, on the other hand, the surge is seen to fail, they will be the ones who made it more difficult, demoralized the armed forces, kneecapped the commander, and telegraphed to the enemy that our will was cracking, and we would shortly be leaving.

The Democrats have also given Bush a partial alibi for a possible failure—he tried, but at a critical moment they threw in the towel. This argument would be plausible enough to attract support from a great many people. Had they let the surge play itself out, with best wishes but grave reservations, the Democrats could have gained a reputation for good will in any event, and for genuine prescience in the case of failure. But there is a difference between warning of failure and seeming to want it or cause it, and this is the line they have stumbled over. They have cut themselves off from all share in a victory, bought themselves a half-share in a loss, should one develop, and given the president they so despise an excuse he did not have before this. If a failure ensues, it is no longer his fault, in its entirety. Now it is his fault—and theirs.

And why is it now at least partly their problem? Because the Democratic tantrum comes at just the wrong time. For the first time in years, Bush has gone back on the offensive (which is where most of his disaffected supporters have longed to see him), and for the first time in a long time we may see some results. "The mere suggestion of a serious crackdown has prompted its targets to run for cover," writes the *Boston Herald*'s Jules Crittenden. "Moktada al-Sadr is angling to get back into the political process. His Shiite militia men have hidden their weapons and are trying to act normal. Sunni insurgents are reportedly hightailing it to Diyala. Iran has signaled it wants positive engagement and negotiations, and is trying to look like a friendly neighbor to Iraq."

From the start, Bush's tendency in Iraq, when faced with a complex mix of political and military problems, has been to emphasize the political aspect, trying to engage or negotiate with people and agents who in retrospect should have been intimidated, disposed of, or otherwise crushed. Now he has altered course: The most important part of his new plan is not the number of men to be added, but the way they will be used—not only to train the Iraqis but to engage and dispose of the enemy.

A conservative who at times has been all too compassionate, Bush has at last been cured of his fancy that he could fight a soft and compassionate war. It is a fancy Americans have been frequently loath to concede. "For some reason, this is a lesson that the U.S. seems to have to learn anew every war," writes the retired Army major and blogger Donald Sensing. "It wasn't until 1863, for example, that the Union Army finally came to understand that the [Confederate] army would not be defeated until it had been vanquished in the field, one time after another, over and over again. U.S. Grant was the first Union general to understand this fact, for which President Lincoln rewarded him with command of all the Union armies in the field."

On this time line, Bush's new commander, General David Petraeus, stands in relation to the prior commanders as Grant does to Civil War losers McClellan and Meade. This is why pulling the plug on the surge now would be like asking Lincoln to fire Grant, accept defeat, and retreat into Maryland, because (1) all the generals before Grant had failed, and therefore Grant would fail also, and (2) Lincoln's record as a war presi-

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dent to date had been such a disaster—picking bad generals, wasting opportunities, failing to crush a smaller and much less well-supplied enemy—that no one could trust him again. Count on this simile to be used over and over, by John McCain or by Rudy Giuliani, as a club to batter the "for the troops before we were against them" brigades. And rest assured that if things break up now, conservatives will hang it around the Democrats' necks from here to eternity. Democrats will scream themselves blue in the face, but they will be countered by plausible arguments. The armed forces will feel betrayed by them. And no one will be able to prove that these charges are wrong.

On January 31, the *Washington Times* ran a front-page story detailing the statements of all the Democrats who had called for more troops to be sent to Iraq before they opposed the surge when Bush came round on this point. But this is just par for the course. They were for the war before they were against it, just as they voted for the $87 billion before they voted against it. That is why, with varied success (Jim Webb and John Kerry), they have tried to round up the few vets they can find to carry their banner, the thought being that a call for retreat sounds better when an ex-fighter issues it, and directs an advance to the rear.

It was thus no surprise that the congressional Democrats attacked Bush for doing the same thing they had once wanted at exactly the moment that he was changing his strategy; lavished praise on his new commander even as they lamented the plan he had written and ignored his warnings that they were helping the enemy; approved him without a single nay vote from any one of their number, and then sent him off with their wishes and blessings, after saying they knew he was on a fool's errand, and cutting him off at the knees. A foolish consistency is not their hobgoblin. But no one can call them great minds.

The one thing on which they are always consistent is their faithful adherence to polls—to the poll of the day and the mood of the moment, the problem being that the day and the moment can change. That's because their eyes are on regaining the White House next year. But the present, intense as it is, is often a poor predictor of what will come next. The great Republican landslide of 1994 was not predictable from a January 1993 standpoint; the Democratic triumph of 2006 was not predictable from a January 2005 standpoint; and the political mood in January 2007 may be a poor prognosticator of the political climate of 2008. Bush was a genius in 2004, and a dupe two years later, just as Clinton was a genius in 1992 and a survivor two years after that.

The 2008 election cannot be predicted, as it depends on too many things that can change without warning; Iraq, Iran, Korea, terror strikes anywhere, unlooked-for wins and losses; challenges and responses no one can imagine, much less strategize on in advance. What looks like smart, or save-your-rear politics in 2007, may look rather different before long. Did we mention this country is not fond of losing? Did we mention that the polls that showed a two-to-one margin against the surge option also showed close to a half-and-half split on its chance of succeeding, and that two in three hoped that it would? Did we mention that by nearly a two to one margin, voters believe that a resolution casting doubt on the president's plans would hurt troop morale and encourage the enemy? Poll-watching surge-bashers might want to keep this in mind.

In the long run, those seen as courting defeat are not thought of fondly. In 1974, triumphant Democrats listened to their base, and to the polls, and to public opinion, and closed down a tedious war against the will of a Republican president. As a result, in the next 30 years they elected exactly two presidents, one in 1976 as a reaction to Watergate (who was called back in disgust a scant four years later), and one in the 1990s, after the Cold War had ended, and in the midst of the "holiday from history," which is not likely to recur. Democrats claim surge proponents are ignoring the lessons of Vietnam, and of history. They might give these some thought for themselves. ♦

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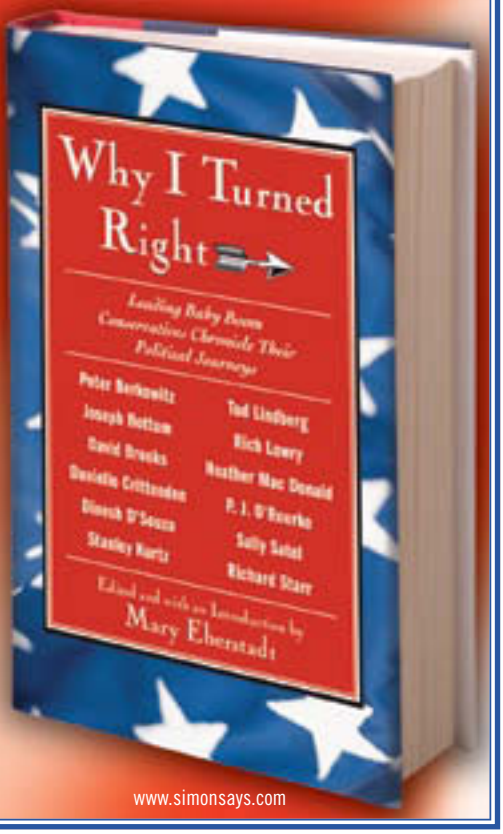

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A Moderate Failure

It wasn't for want of conservatives that the GOP lost in 2006. BY FRED BARNES

The idea has gotten around that Republicans lost the 2006 election because they weren't conservative enough. At *National Review*'s conservative summit, Jeb Bush, the ex-Florida governor, said as much: "Sadly, in Washington, Republicans have lost their way. We have become timid." He said Republicans have abandoned conservative reform. House minority leader John Boehner has said roughly the same thing. So has Rep. John Shadegg of Arizona. And so have an army of disgruntled conservatives.

It's true that congressional Republicans would have helped themselves last fall if they'd championed the reforms listed by Bush—Social Security, health care, education—and moved on congressional and immigration reform as well. But they would have lost the election anyway, the House for sure, and perhaps the Senate. And it wasn't because Republicans weren't conservative enough.

Conservative voters had plenty to be unhappy about, particularly excessive spending by the then-Republican Congress and the growth of the federal government. Many conservatives detest President Bush's education and immigration policies. But it wasn't conservatives who flipped in the election. They showed up and voted for Republicans. It was independents who jumped to the Democrats. They tend to be nonideological swing voters, not the type who would ditch Republicans because they weren't conservative enough.

Look at the numbers, tedious as that may be. First, the decline in the share of Republicans who voted for Republican House candidates was minimal: 91 percent in 2006, the same as in 2000, and only marginally less than 93 percent in 2004. What this means is that the Republican base voted for Republicans. And who makes up that base? Conservatives.

More specifically, of self-identified conservatives, 78 percent voted for Republican House candidates, down from 81 percent in 2004 and 80 percent in 2000. This is not a statistically significant dropoff. That was not the case with independents, who gave Republican House candidates 46 percent of their votes in 2004 but only 39 percent in 2006. That is a pretty significant dip. The Democratic share of the independent vote jumped from 47 percent in 2000 and 49 percent in 2004 to 57 percent last year.

Independents are a large voting bloc in the inner suburbs. And the overall vote for House candidates in these suburbs of the nation's top 50 metropolitan areas rose from 53 percent Democratic in 2002 to 60 percent in 2006. Republicans held their own last year among regular church attendees, who are generally conservative. But they lost ground among secular voters, those who never go to church or synagogue. The Democratic share of the secular vote in House races climbed from

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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58 percent in 2000 to 60 percent in 2004, then to a new high of 67 percent in 2006. Secular voters include many independents.

And look who lost in the election. It wasn't chiefly conservatives, who may or may not have been unflaggingly conservative. Aside from those House members tainted by corruption (or at least charges of wrongdoing), the biggest victims were Republican moderates in districts with a sizable bloc of independents and soft Republicans, who are the functional equivalent of independents.

Start with House Republicans in Connecticut, where two (Nancy Johnson, Rob Simmons) out of three moderates were defeated. Moderates Charlie Bass in New Hampshire and Sue Kelly of New York lost. Another loser was Jim Leach of Iowa, a preeminent moderate. Open moderate seats previously held by Republicans, such as the border district in Arizona where Jim Kolbe retired, were also won by Democrats. And the list goes on.

The percentage of people who identify themselves as moderates in exit polls varies from election to election. Last year, it reached 47 percent of the electorate. And Democratic House candidates won 61 percent of that group, up from 56 percent in 2004 and 53 percent in 2000. It's safe to say moderate deserters from the Republican fold were not motivated by the absence of full-throated conservatism among Republican candidates.

In truth, Republicans lost for the obvious reasons: Iraq and corruption, but also the poor performance of congressional Republicans. Iraq was the single biggest factor. Wars without victory in sight invariably damage the party in power.

So conservatives should stop flagellating themselves. It's certainly preferable for them to stick to conservative principles. But doing so wouldn't have averted a bad election outcome last year. What conservatives should remember is the Republican party is a center-right party. And the problem in 2006 was that the center did not hold. ♦

Not Too Late to Curb Dear Leader

The road to Pyongyang runs through Beijing.

BY DAN BLUMENTHAL AND AARON FRIEDBERG

Karl Marx famously observed that history repeats itself, the first time as tragedy, the second as farce. The deal that the Bush administration appears to have entered into with Pyongyang is no joke, but it does have eerie echoes of the one signed 13 years ago by President Bill Clinton. Although, at this writing, details have not been made public, news reports suggest that, in return for a relaxation of financial sanctions imposed in September 2005, Pyongyang will freeze further reprocessing of plutonium at its Yongbyon nuclear facility and return to the negotiating table.

While true believers in the Six Party process will no doubt praise this as progress, it is, in fact, a step in the wrong direction. As in 1994, when it signed the Agreed Framework, North Korea has persuaded others to reward it for taking steps that it can reverse at any time. Pyongyang has worked itself out of a tight spot, the clock has been reset, and the game can begin again. The big difference now, of course, is that in the intervening period the North has accumulated a significant stockpile of weapons-grade plutonium and successfully built and tested a nuclear explosive. Unless the Bush administration changes course, the next president will confront a situation that this one once described as unacceptable: The world's worst regime will have succeeded in acquiring a small arsenal of nuclear weapons, and it will be well on its way to building more.

It may be that nothing can be done to alter this outcome. As has been true for the past four years, the administration has its hands more than full with other problems, and it may simply lack the energy and resources to make a last attempt at solving this one. In recent weeks, however, President Bush has shown a remarkable willingness to defy critics and take risks in hopes of achieving what he regards as essential goals in Iraq. Unless he is content to pass off the North Korean problem to his successor, the president will have to do something similar in East Asia, this time by pressing China to use its very considerable leverage to bring Kim Jong Il to heel.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, the time to begin such an effort has now arrived. The president's decision to increase force levels in Iraq has sent a strong signal of resolve to the nation's enemies. Threats of action on other issues are more likely to be taken seriously today than they were only a few months ago. In diplomacy, the appearance of weakness leads to weakness, but strength can also beget strength.

Since North Korea tested a bomb last October, critics have heaped blame on President Bush for "allowing" North Korea to go nuclear. If only the administration had abandoned its stubborn insistence on multilateral negotiations and engaged in one-on-one talks—if only it had recognized the North's legiti-

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mate security concerns, and offered guarantees—surely Kim Jong Il could have been talked out of going nuclear.

These speculations overlook the long and unhappy history of negotiations with Pyongyang. For most of the 1990s, Washington was more than willing to offer inducements and aid and to engage the North at the most senior levels of government. Indeed, towards the end of the Clinton administration, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright traveled to Pyongyang, famously toasting the health of a beaming Kim Jong Il. Not a bad day's work for the dictator of a country on the brink of economic collapse. Of course, as we now know, Kim had good reason to smile. Throughout this period, he managed not only to retain the option of restarting his plutonium program but simultaneously to embark upon a secret highly enriched uranium program.

The claim that Kim can be won over with yet more assistance and assurances ignores the rigidly ideological and deeply paranoid nature of his regime. Even if the Dear Leader aspired only to live out his days in peace, he would not be reassured by earnest promises from a country he believes is bent on destroying him. In fact, Kim has far more ambitious goals than mere survival. He has made clear his aim of ruling over a unified Korean Peninsula, and there is every reason to think that he means it. The only thing that would truly make him feel secure would be the withdrawal of the United States, not only from South Korea, but all of East Asia.

At home, Kim governs through terror and coercion and without regard for the suffering of his citizens. To keep his regime in business he uses hard currency to buy luxuries for his inner circle while allowing ordinary people to starve. Many of these dollars are earned through criminal activities, such as counterfeiting and drug smuggling, while others derive, as we have recently learned, from U.N. development aid diverted directly into Kim's bank accounts.

Far from welcoming opportunities to open his country to trade and outside influences, Kim regards these as deeply threatening to his own survival. To believe that he would abandon his nuclear weapons to ensure a better life for his people is to indulge in fantasy.

After confronting Pyongyang in 2002 with evidence of its hitherto secret highly enriched uranium program, the Bush administration responded to further provocations by Kim—pulling out of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, reprocessing plutonium—by organizing and engaging in multilateral diplomacy, with the Chinese, Japanese, Russians, and South Koreans as partners. The purpose of this effort was to secure a verifiable end to the North Korean nuclear program through a combination of negotiation and increasing economic and diplomatic pressure.

That approach could have worked, if all of the parties had been willing to both talk and, if necessary, squeeze. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Pyongyang's economic position has been precarious. Without aid, fuel, and hard currency flowing in from its neighbors, the North could not survive. A credible threat by all countries to cut Kim's lifeline would have presented him with a stark choice: Give up your weapons or risk losing control of your country.

While the United States and Japan have followed through on both halves of the "talk and squeeze" strategy, China and South Korea have not. Indeed, to the contrary, since the current standoff began, both have increased their assistance to the North, effectively buffering it against pressure. Present policy has failed, not because the United States has been too tough and unyielding, but because China, South Korea, and the U.N. Development Program have been too soft.

Each of our erstwhile partners has its reasons for going easy on Pyongyang. Under the leadership of Kim Dae Jung and now Roh Moo Hyun, South Korea's government has been committed to a policy of unconditional engagement that is indistinguishable from appeasement. Behind the rhetoric of unification, Seoul is in no rush to take on the enormous burdens of rebuilding an impoverished and backward North. While the South Korean presidential election scheduled for late 2007 may bring tougher and more realistic leaders to power, dramatic shifts are unlikely anytime soon.

China's relative passivity is the product of a number of considerations. Taking action to force North Korea to abandon its nuclear program carries substantial risks for Beijing. Pressed to the wall, Kim's regime could lash out or collapse, unleashing a flood of refugees, depriving China of a buffer state, and possibly denying it the ability to shape the long-term disposition of the Korean peninsula. Meanwhile, by holding out the hope that it may yet help solve the North Korean nuclear issue, Beijing earns credit from, and gains leverage over, Washington. From where China's leaders sit, a continuation of the status quo has considerable benefits.

Persuading Beijing to change course therefore depends on convincing it that continued passivity is riskier than action. In 2002 and early 2003 China's leaders believed that Washington might very well use force against the North, and they may have feared that the Japanese were about to embark on their own nuclear program. Deeply concerned about the direction of Bush administration policy in East Asia, and eager to improve relations with Washington, Beijing probably also believed that its performance on the North Korean issue would be seen as a litmus test and could determine the future course of its relations with the United States.

Today, despite expressions of concern over "tensions on the Korean peninsula," China's leaders are far more relaxed. Washington has effectively taken the use of force off the

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table, assured Beijing that Japan will not go nuclear, and made clear its commitment to maintaining close ties with China, regardless of what it does, or fails to do, on North Korea. Given all this, it is far easier, indeed, much more rational, for Beijing to hold to its existing policy.

Trying to change China's calculus will not be easy and could be risky, but the alternatives are clear: either a bad deal that, like the 1994 Agreed Framework, alleviates pressure and rewards North Korea without excising its nuclear capabilities, or a continued stalemate that permits Pyongyang to solidify its position as a nuclear weapons state.

If the Bush administration wants to have a chance of solving the North Korean problem, it will need to take three steps:

First, instead of backing off, the president should authorize the imposition of further financial sanctions on the North. He should also quietly tell Beijing that, unless it is willing to clean its own house, the U.S. government will follow the money trail of North Korea's counterfeiting and smuggling wherever it leads, even if this means going after banks, front companies, and individuals in China.

Second, instead of endlessly praising Beijing for its thus far fruitless efforts, the administration should make clear that failure to bring the North Korean issue to a satisfactory resolution will inevitably have consequences for U.S.-China relations. The White House now faces a Democratic majority in Congress that may press for protectionist measures against China. Fending off such demands with the argument that China is an essential diplomatic partner and a "responsible stakeholder" will be much harder, the administration should make clear, if Beijing fails to deliver on North Korea.

Finally, the U.S. government needs to make clear that, regardless of how events unfold, it will do what is necessary to defend its own interests and to help its Asian allies defend theirs. If North Korea's nuclear programs are not rolled back, Washington cannot be expected indefinitely to be able to keep the Japanese nuclear genie in the bottle. Faced with a hostile regime that is expanding its nuclear arsenal and threatening to sell nuclear technology and materials, Washington can lead a regional coalition to contain and deter North Korea and to work toward a unified, democratic Korean peninsula. This may require, among other things, a larger U.S. military presence off China's coasts, more aggressive interdiction efforts against North Korean ships and aircraft, more attempts to help North Korean citizens escape, and greater integration of missile defense and other programs with Japan and perhaps also South Korea and Taiwan.

As in Iraq, there are no easy options and no guarantees of success. But in Asia, as in the Middle East, it is also plain that "staying the course," or trying again what failed in the past, is not an acceptable strategy. ♦

Michael Ramirez

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Mr. Sali Goes to Washington

Another maverick from Idaho's First.

BY JAMIE WEINSTEIN

Idaho is a red state. Much of the country went Democratic last November, but Idaho saw all its statewide races go Republican, as well as both of its House seats. And no race drew as much attention as Republican Bill Sali's campaign to represent Idaho's First Congressional District.

The First District has long been home to eccentric figures, most notably the late Rep. Helen Chenoweth-Hage, who during her congressional campaigns famously held "endangered salmon bakes" to protest the 1973 Endangered Species Act. With Sali running to replace Republican Butch Otter, who retired from Congress to run a successful gubernatorial bid, the district once again featured a candidate who was no stranger to publicity.

A great deal of lore surrounds Sali and his 16 years in the Idaho House. Born outside of Idaho, Sali moved to the state when he was eight years old. As a child, he says, he never dreamed of getting into politics. "When I was in high school," he said in a recent phone interview, "there were two things I knew I didn't want to do. One was be a lawyer, and the other was be in politics. And I ended up doing both."

Sali's tenure in the Idaho House was not without theatrics. Years ago, when Republican congressman Mike Simpson was the speaker of the Idaho House, he got so fed up with Sali that he threatened to throw him out of a window. While no defenestration occurred, it would not be the last time Sali clashed with a leader of his own party.

Perhaps his most famous confrontation came in April 2006. Nearing the close of the legislative session, a bill set to strengthen penalties for violating the state's informed consent law—which mandates that doctors inform women seeking abortions about fetal development—came before the chamber. A longtime pro-life activist, Sali made a controversial speech on the floor making a causal link between abortion and breast cancer.

Bill Sali

Illustration by Earl Keleny

According to local press covering the session, as Sali spoke, the state House's minority leader, Democrat Wendy Jaquet, began to look visibly disturbed. Jaquet is a breast cancer survivor. The Republican House speaker, Bruce Newcomb, temporarily called a halt to Sali's speech. He told Sali that there were enough votes to pass the bill, so there was no need to be unnecessarily provocative. "Why stick your finger in people's eyes?" he reportedly asked Sali, referring to Jaquet.

But Sali pressed on. He kept alluding to the highly debatable and, according to the American Cancer Society, still unproven linkage between abortion and breast cancer. Jaquet left the chamber. Speaker Newcomb was forced to order an early recess. "That idiot is just an absolute idiot," Newcomb told the press afterward. "He doesn't have one ounce of empathy in his whole fricking body. And you can put that in the paper."

Despite his rocky relationship with other Idaho Republicans, Sali, backed by the Club for Growth, won the Republican congressional nomination with just over a quarter of the votes cast in the crowded primary. He went on to win the general election over Democratic businessman Larry Grant, 50 percent to 45 percent, a closer margin than expected in the overwhelmingly Republican First District.

Asked about some of his past problems with his fellow partisans, Sali told me that he is "not spending a lot of time looking in the rearview mirror." He added that he and Rep. Simpson—his would-be defenestrator—"have a good relationship at this point." And he blames the media for his controversial image. "I'm trying to remember if there was a single incident where the media came to me and asked me what I thought," he said. "You know, they were always printing one side without coming to hear what the response was. I can't say it happened every single time, but it seemed to happen way more often than not."

Jamie Weinstein is a reporter in Washington.

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On the phone, Sali doesn't quite live up to his controversial reputation. He speaks calmly and rationally about an array of topics. Asked about Iraq, for example, he goes into a wide ranging discussion about "what Islamic jihadists are up to," tracing what he considers the "three revolutions in Islam that kind of explain where we are today": from the rise of Wahhabism to the ascension of Ayatollah Khomeini to the founding of al Qaeda.

Recently Sali was elected president of the 13-member GOP freshman class, the smallest such class in over a decade. He had been urged to run for the position by freshman Rep. Doug Lamborn of Colorado. Lamborn said that he urged Sali to run because he admired "his strong conservative values," his "willingness to take a stand," and his "leadership ability." Asked whether Sali's reputation gave him any pause, Lamborn said he was "skeptical about local media," and added that he understands that tough things get said in contentious races, since he ran in a crowded primary too.

As freshman president, Sali has adopted an agenda that shows his pragmatic side. Besides bringing in speakers to help the new Republican members learn their way around the Capitol, Sali wants to "arrange social events with the Democrat freshmen" because "these are people who we're going to have to work with in the majority to move legislation." Instead of burning bridges, Sali seems to want to build them.

But how long before he lights a torch? While Sali is reasonable and collected over the phone, his contentious past always looms in the background. Was the controversy he generated in Idaho the result of media bias and thin skins? Or is Sali exactly what he is portrayed to be, a dogmatic ideologue unable to get along with members of his own party, much less the opposition? Will he be the right's version of Cynthia McKinney, or the "compassionate, hard working, thinking kind of guy" he claims he is? ♦

Terminate This Plan

The shortcomings of Schwarzenegger's health care reform. BY JOHN GOODMAN

Forcing people to do what they are not otherwise disposed to doing can be quite difficult. All but three states make car insurance mandatory. Yet, nationwide, about 14.6 percent of drivers are uninsured, a figure similar to the fraction of Americans who lack health insurance: 15.7 percent.

Hawaii was the first state to pursue universal health insurance by mandating that employers provide health policies to their workers. That was about three decades ago. Currently 9.2 percent of Hawaiians are uninsured—more than in some states that have no such mandate.

In 1988, Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis ran for president on a promise to take his Massachusetts health plan nationwide. "I've insured everybody in my state," Dukakis declared. But, at last count, one in ten Massachusetts citizens lacked health insurance.

The fashion of the moment is to declare that health insurance is like car insurance, something everyone should be required to have. So say former governor Mitt Romney, with a new health plan for Massachusetts, and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, with his plan for California. These efforts are unlikely to succeed. In some ways, as can be seen from the example of California, such plans are likely to make matters no better and in some ways worse.

Government should be encouraging people to privately insure. Public dollars should follow people, not the other way around. If people of modest means buy private insurance, then they should get a subsidy. If they stay uninsured, the money should stay in the safety net system. This way, no new spending is required and no mandate is needed. The goal here should be to eliminate perverse incentives and offer low-income families access to the same system everybody else participates in.

To its credit, the California plan would redirect public dollars to private insurance. But the plan errs in several other respects: It would require people to buy insurance; it would be costly to individuals, businesses, and the state; it would generate more perverse incentives than it would eliminate; and it would create new burdens for low income families.

What kind of insurance will people be forced to have? Uninsured children and adults with incomes below the federal poverty line will be enrolled in California's Medicaid program, Medi-Cal. Uninsured Californians with incomes higher than that but less than two-and-a-half to three times the poverty level (about $60,000 for a family of four) must participate in either California's state-run health care program for children, Healthy Families, or be enrolled in a state-run purchasing pool. This means a huge increase in the number of people covered by government insurance. Everyone else who is uninsured will be required to buy private insurance (although the minimum coverage is a plan with a $5,000 deductible, the kind of insurance that costs most people only a few hundred dollars a month).

John Goodman is president of the National Center for Policy Analysis.

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Jimmy Carter, Israel and the Jews

Is our former President ignorant, malevolent – or both?

Jimmy Carter, our 39th president, has just written a book in which he purports to clarify the causes of the unending Israel-Arab conflict. The title of the book shows the bias that permeates it: *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*. It is a scurrilous comparison with the oppression of the black majority in South Africa. The entire book is shot through with falsehoods, distortions, and omissions of facts.

What are the facts?

There are so many falsehoods in the book that it isn't easy to know where to begin. But here are just a few of the many distortions in it.

• Yasser Arafat, the "leader" of the Palestinians for decades, was the man responsible for many murders that he had personally authorized. Hafez-al-Assad, the former tyrant of Syria, was also a mass murderer, personally responsible for the killing of at least 25,000 in the Syrian city of Hama. Both are described as leaders who diligently sought peace with Israel. Mr. Carter knows better, of course.

> "It is...not likely that the lies, misstatements, and omissions in his book are the result of ignorance. They must be the result, therefore, of malevolence – ..."

• Mr. Carter asserts that peace would have descended on Israel/Palestine if the Israelis had not "colonized" Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"). But that is quite incorrect. In the first place, the term "colonization" is not applicable. It presupposes that Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") is Palestinian territory, which those aggressive Israeli Jews have usurped. Not so, of course! Jews have had a presence in the area since time immemorial and certainly have at least the same rights to live there as the Arabs. It was never "Palestinian" land. So there can't have been any "colonization." Mr. Carter knows that, of course.

• Mr. Carter makes a great to-do about the "apartheid wall that snakes through of what is left of the West Bank." The purpose of this "wall," which is really a fence over most of its course, is to safeguard the Israeli populace from the marauding murder gangs that have terrorized Israel for years and have caused hundreds of victims. The fence has successfully done that. Mr. Carter knows that, of course.

• Mr. Carter focuses on Security Council Resolution No. 242, which calls for return of captured territories in exchange for peace, recognition, and secure boundaries. Nowhere does he mention that Israel accepted the Resolution and has fully complied with it. While not having returned *all* of those territories (the Resolution did not call for that), it has returned all of Gaza and, more important, the vast Sinai, with its strategic passes, its strategic port, its strategic expanse of a huge buffer zone, and the oil fields that Israel had developed. They yield over $1 billion in revenues per year, which would have made Israel independent of petroleum imports for the foreseeable future. And he does not mention that the Arab nations rejected Resolution 242 out of hand and instead issued their famous "three no's:" No peace, no recognition, and no negotiation with Israel. Mr. Carter knows that, of course.

• Mr. Carter blames Israelis for their lack of effort to compose their interminable differences with the Palestinians. But that is an outrageous lie. The Israelis have almost compulsively tried, time and time again, to find a solution to this never-ending problem. All of their efforts have faltered because of the racist and theocratic hatred that the Palestinians and Muslims have against the Jews, a hatred that nothing seems to assuage. One of the last memorable such efforts was in the last year of President Clinton's presidency, when he met with Mr. Arafat and with Ehud Barak, then prime minister of Israel. Mr. Barak declared his willingness to turn over 95% of the "West Bank" and the Arab quarter of Jerusalem to the Palestinians and to financial compensation to the "refugees." He did balk at allowing *all* of those so-called refugees – now miraculously swollen from the original 600,000 to 5 million – to "return" to Israel. It would (as intended) have meant the end of the Jewish state. Mr. Arafat left in a huff and started his second intifada, which has killed and maimed thousands on both sides. Mr. Carter knows that, of course.

• Space does not permit to give more examples of the lies, and omissions in Mr. Carter's malicious book. But there are certainly many, beginning with his not mentioning that in 1947 the United Nations advocated a division of the country into a Jewish and an Arab sector, with Jerusalem being internationalized. The Jews accepted that compromise; the Arabs rejected it and instead invaded Israel with five national armies. He does not mention that the largest contingent of Israelis are Jews expelled or forced to flee from their Arab home countries, where they had been living for centuries. Mr. Carter knows all of that, of course.

Mr. Carter was certainly one of our most ineffective presidents, comparable perhaps to Fillmore, Polk or Harding. But he was probably one of the most intelligent. It is therefore not likely that the lies, misstatements, and omissions in his book are the result of ignorance. They must be the result, therefore, of malevolence – against Israel and against the Jews.

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How will people get their insurance? Employers with 10 or more workers will be given a "pay-or-play" option: provide insurance or pay a 4 percent payroll tax to the state. Individuals without employer coverage will be required to buy insurance in the marketplace. Insurers will be required to take all comers, with no discrimination against those who are sick and likely to have higher costs. If a family's income is low enough, the state will subsidize premiums.

So what happens to people who refuse to get insured? In ten single-spaced pages describing the plan, I could find only one sentence that addressed the question—with vague references to garnishing wages and withholding tax refunds. In fact, so little apparent thought has been given to enforcement that it's hard to escape the conclusion that enforcement is not very important to the governor and his staff. But if insuring the uninsured is not the goal, what could it be?

From top to bottom, the plan is designed to maximize federal matching funds. For every new dollar of state spending there will be an additional dollar of federal spending. Good for California perhaps, but bad for the rest of us federal taxpayers. Out of $12 billion in new spending, less than one in ten dollars will consist of diverting government charity-care dollars to subsidize private insurance premiums (the plan's one good idea). All the rest consists of matching money from the feds and new taxes imposed on employers and providers.

In addition to the 4 percent wage tax paid by employers who don't insure their workers, doctors will face a new 2 percent tax on their revenues and hospitals will pay 4 percent. But providers shouldn't complain, according to the governor. The reason: The state is increasing the rate at which it reimburses Medicaid.

Think of all this in the context of the new pay-as-you-go budget rules Democrats in Congress are expected to adopt. Republicans will not be able to propose a tax cut without equivalent cuts in entitlement benefits—not a popular move. The governor of California, however, is proceeding as if he enjoys a great deal more freedom. Schwarzenegger is about to increase federal spending by $50 billion over ten years, and no member of Congress will even have the opportunity to vote on it! (Parenthetically, this is a good argument for scrapping Medicaid's matching formulas and replacing them with block grants.) It's great for states to experiment. But why should federal taxpayers pay 50¢ on the dollar to foot the bill?

So what could go wrong? Like the Massachusetts plan (but much worse), the California plan encourages people with unsubsidized insurance to get subsidized insurance instead. That is, a lot of employers of low-income workers will drop their coverage and pay a 4 percent fine once they realize their employees will be eligible for free coverage under an expanded Medicaid program or will qualify for income-based premium subsidies. As employers drop their coverage, system costs will rise. And because of the new insurance regulations, health insurance will cost more for everyone. This will encourage healthy people to exit the system, leaving the sickest and most costly people behind, again driving up costs. The plan also opens the door for future legislatures to convert the employee mandate into an employer mandate, thereby increasing employer costs and encouraging businesses to leave the state.

Perhaps the worst feature of the plan is the new burdens it creates for the people it claims to help: low- and moderate-income, uninsured families. Remember, these people are currently receiving health care as a form of government charity, often through emergency room visits; and according to the RAND Corporation, once they access the system, their care is just as good as everyone else's care. Under the new plan, workers will get hit by the 4 percent wage tax (a tax nominally imposed on their employers). If the workers do not buy insurance, they will have wages garnished and tax refunds withheld. If they do buy insurance, they will have a $5,000 deductible catastrophic policy, which is of great benefit to California hospitals (and perhaps even to the family if they have assets), but of no benefit for the purchase of primary care.

When they do seek care, they will face a new tax on their medical bills (nominally imposed on the providers). The poor will not become empowered consumers in a medical marketplace; instead they will likely continue to get care exactly where they get care today, for example, hospital emergency rooms. In sum: Californians will pay more for their health care; low-income families will pay a lot more for their care; federal taxpayers will get taken to the cleaners; and the quality of care—especially the care delivered to low-income Californians—will probably not change one iota. ♦

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The Treaty of the Democratic Peace

What the world needs now

By Tod Lindberg

For years now, the political science literature has been exploring the phenomenon of the "democratic peace," according to which, to state it in its bluntest form, democracies do not go to war with one another. It's not that democracies are pacifist by nature. Democratic countries, acting alone or in concert, do go to war with nondemocratic countries from time to time, for example the United States and others against Saddam Hussein's Iraq and NATO against former Yugoslavia over the attempted ethnic cleansing of Kosovo.

Moreover, the record of peace among democracies is not without its asterisks. As the neorealist scholar Kenneth N. Waltz has noted, Germany on the eve of the First World War was, by the standards of the day, "democratic." German "militarism" in the late 19th century was not an authoritarian imposition on the German people but something they and their elected representatives supported—as indeed going to war in 1914 was popular in Britain as well. Reclassifying a country as "nondemocratic" because it has chosen to make war on a democracy is a temptation to which the "democratic peace" thesis may give rise.

Young democracies also pose problems; for example, Ecuador (less than three years democratic) and Peru (less than one year) went to war in 1981. The Kargil war between India and Pakistan in 1999 exemplifies another category of exception: India's democratic bona fides are beyond challenge, but Pakistan, though it had had a democratically elected president and a civilian government since 1988, was a distinctly *illiberal* democracy. Indeed, Pakistan's current ruler, Pervez Musharraf, took power in a military coup within a few months of the war's end. And there are other objections: Critics of the democratic peace thesis often advance the argument that the number of instances on which to base generalizations is small.

The Bush administration, of course, has invested heavily in the idea of the beneficial effects of democracy. As the president put it in his second inaugural address, "It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world." Bush pointed to two reasons for this policy, one metaphysical ("no one is fit to be a master, and no one deserves to be a slave") and one practical: "as long as whole regions of the world simmer in resentment and tyranny—prone to ideologies that feed hatred and excuse murder—violence will gather, and multiply in destructive power, and cross the most defended borders, and raise a mortal threat." Now, one can agree with the metaphysical claim, and even with the long-term prognosis—as well as the inescapable fact that there is no way to get to the long term except via the short term—without relinquishing reasonable qualms about who might be empowered by free elections in the short run.

But for all the imperfections of a thesis claiming that democracies do not go to war with each other, we are left with one big and inescapable fact: A large number of mature, liberal democracies have no intention whatsoever of going to war with each other, not now, not ever. Such disputes as arise among them, they will settle by peaceful means. And one of the reasons they will be able to settle disputes peacefully is that they have learned they have no "vital interests" that conflict. That's no small thing historically.

Moreover, the number of such countries is growing. The 20th century saw several "waves" of expansion of democracy, the most recent in Central and Eastern Europe, extending in the new millennium as far east as the Orange Revolution in Ukraine and the Rose Revolution in Georgia. Freedom House listed 122 "electoral democracies" as of 2005.

Citizens of democracies and their elected leaders tend to regard democratic political arrangements—government with the consent of the governed—as uniquely legitimate.

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As they see it, democracy is not one choice among many legitimate types of regime but the best choice for those capable of it. Democracies therefore have values in common—an affinity that constrains conflict and constitutes the true underpinning of the "democratic peace."

Democracies also have a pretty good record of speaking up for free and fair elections, human rights, and other liberal values in nondemocratic states and states in transition. Liberal democracies regard the spread of liberal democracy as in their collective interest. The United States and Europe stood in solidarity in support of the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, for example, and the united front contributed to the pressure on the streets to force the government to nullify the results of the election it had stolen. It's striking that the leading outside opponent of the Orange Revolution was none other than Vladimir Putin, Russia's increasingly autocratic leader, who values Russian influence in its near-abroad so highly that he is happy to make common cause with such dictators as Alexander Lukashenko in Belarus.

Without question, the post-Cold War "enlargement" agenda of NATO and the European Union fostered democratic development in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Both NATO and the E.U. emphasize democratic development as a precondition for beginning the process that leads to membership. The prospect of access to Western institutions, including the security they offer and the economic opportunities they create, provided an incentive to young (and in some cases unsteady) democracies for good policy choices, political development, and cooperative rather than competitive strategies with their neighbors. There is no better illustration of this than the decision in 2000 of countries aspiring to join NATO to work together for membership for all who qualified rather than for each to try to establish its bona fides by invidious comparisons highlighting the shortcomings of the others. That cooperative effort led to a far bigger round of NATO enlargement in 2004, seven countries in all, than anyone had anticipated only a few years earlier.

Likewise, the E.U. increasingly points with considerable justification to the regional success of its "soft power," to use Joseph Nye's term for the ability of a state to get others to want what it wants. In truth, it's a lot more work to get into the E.U. than to qualify for NATO membership; the amount of national law that has to be brought into harmony with the E.U.'s *acquis communautaires* is vast. But the benefits are also quite substantial in terms of market access, standardization, and investment flows. Poorer countries are also eligible for assistance from Brussels, not only as new members but also as aspiring members. The hard political choices required to fight corruption, increase transparency, and develop a democratic political process thus make one eligible for rewards both long- and short-term.

It's easy now to be complacent about Central and Eastern Europe, because of the extraordinary tales of political and economic success that have unfolded there. But suppose Western institutions hadn't reached out to Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s. Suppose, instead, they had made it clear that the E.U. was an institution for rich Western European countries alone and that NATO was closed to new membership, if indeed it wasn't going out of business. Does anyone really think that 15 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the outcome would have been the same in terms of the region's peaceableness, democratic development, and economic growth? In an international culture of self-help rather than cooperation and integration, what would have kept Slobodan Milosevic's bloody-minded nationalism from becoming not an aberration but the norm?

The attractive power of NATO and the E.U. have led to proposals for enlargement beyond the original geographical origins of each. Ivo Daalder and James Goldgeier have recently made the case for a "Global NATO" in *Foreign Affairs*, and Jan Ole Kiso and Adrian Taylor recently offered a European perspective along the same lines in *Europe's World*. The E.U. is grappling with the question of "European" identity in assessing future enlargement. Both NATO and the E.U. have expressed support for robust policies of engagement with nonmembers in their "neighborhood." Nevertheless, there is significant resistance among current members of the E.U. and NATO to the transformation of either by enlargement outside the limits of Europe or the Euro-Atlantic, however construed. The defeat by referendum of the E.U.'s proposed Constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands in 2005 has given rise to much talk of "enlargement fatigue."

No one expects any change in that sentiment anytime soon, leaving Turkey's candidacy in a state of limbo or worse. The joke making the rounds on the transatlantic circuit in fall 2006 was that the optimists think Turkey will join the E.U. during the Albanian presidency, whereas the pessimists think Albania will join the E.U. during the Turkish presidency. Although NATO's door remains ajar, the cases for entry are clearly getting harder. At some point soon, we begin to rub up against the practical geographical limits of the "attractive power" of NATO and the E.U. for promoting democracy and good governance.

So where does that leave the rest of the world? While the Euro-Atlantic community is relatively well served in terms of its capacity for democratic states to cooperate when they wish to do so through NATO and the E.U., other geographical regions lack comparable institutional

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infrastructure. Major regional organizations typically do not enforce criteria for membership any more than the United Nations enforces the requirements in its Charter for members to adhere to human rights and other norms. If you are there, you are in. Needless to say, this doesn't create incentives for reform.

Multilateral organizations and institutions that are not geographically oriented often lead would-be members or beneficiaries to make better policy choices, or at least officially favored choices. Here, the World Trade Organization and the World Bank come to mind. But, of course, democracy promotion by these means is at best indirect, usually through measures aimed at increased economic and government transparency, anticorruption efforts, and the like.

Bilateral or regional initiatives can make a difference too. The Bush administration's Millennium Challenge Corporation provides development assistance ranging to the hundreds of millions of dollars to governments that meet reform criteria, including a component devoted to "Ruling Justly" that pushes in the direction of democratic development. The National Endowment for Democracy is able to point to a number of successes over the course of its 24-year history of channeling assistance to democratic reformers and revolutionaries. In the case of Belarus, Northern European neighbors from Sweden to the Baltics have been especially active in helping a democratic opposition to the Lukashenko regime get organized.

But we are still waiting for anything like the "attractive power" of the E.U. and NATO on a global scale. The best effort so far was a Clinton administration brainchild, the Community of Democracies. The CD is a loose affinity organization that first met in 2000 in Warsaw, where participating nations, typically represented by their foreign ministers, adopted the "Warsaw Declaration" pledging their commitment to democracy and the promotion of democracy. The problem is that a number of nondemocratic countries, such as Jordan, Algeria, Tunisia, and Bangladesh, participated and signed the declaration. The CD has met on several occasions since but has yet to develop much in the way of institutional capacity. Worse, how you might transform it from what it is to what one would like it to be is an exquisite diplomatic challenge, entailing, as it necessarily would, kicking people out.

Some have proposed greater cooperation and coordination among democracies at the United Nations. A wide array of NGOs favor establishing a "Caucus of Democracies" within the U.N. in order to encourage promotion of democracy and human rights. The 2005 United States Institute of Peace Task Force on U.N. Reform (the Gingrich-Mitchell task force) strongly endorsed efforts to strengthen the Caucus of Democracies at the U.N. But the odds against using the United Nations to promote democracy are formidable, as the ongoing depredations of the Human Rights Council, the "reformed" successor to the widely discredited Human Rights Commission in Geneva, make painfully clear. As long as the informal mechanism providing for rotation within regional blocs remains entrenched—thus giving each dictatorship its day in the sun—the U.N. will be largely ineffectual in promoting human rights.

Efforts to strengthen cooperation among democracies are chiefly motivated by the view of proponents that democracies acting in concert have a special capacity to legitimize international action because the governments have a legitimate claim to be speaking for the people of their countries. Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay have been at the forefront of this argument, urging in the *American Interest* the creation of a "Concert of Democracies." An earlier incarnation of the "Concert of Democracies" idea became a marquee recommendation of the Princeton Project on National Security. Some proponents, such as Daalder, regard the legitimacy obtained by agreement among democracies as superior to the legitimacy represented by agreement of groups of nations that include nondemocracies, such as the U.N. Security Council or General Assembly. Others, such as Princeton's Anne-Marie Slaughter and G. John Ikenberry, co-directors of the Princeton Project, prefer to work through the U.N. to seek legitimacy but see democracies acting in concert as an alternative in the event of the inability of the U.N. to take effective action (e.g., NATO in Kosovo, Darfur).

The question of how to give democratic states the operational capacity to act collectively has remained a difficult one. Granting the fact that mature, liberal democracies live in peace with each other, agree on the unique legitimacy democratic governance provides, have a track record of assisting countries making a transition to democracy, and might wish to collaborate on at least some issues in a global forum that excludes the worst human rights abusers, tyrants, and authoritarians from the deliberations, maybe it's time to make a clean break. Maybe it's time for the United States to join other democracies in adopting a new Treaty of the Democratic Peace.

The parties to such a treaty would reaffirm, consistent with the United Nations Charter and their other international obligations, their commitment to democratic governance; note their long practice of living peacefully among themselves; affirm their intention to continue to do so permanently and to settle all matters between them peacefully; and commit to the extension of the democratic peace by pledging assistance to other states in the development and improvement of their practice of democratic self-government.

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The treaty would create a council—it could indeed be called the Concert of Democracies or, as Kiso and Taylor propose, the Organization of Democratic States, or something else—charged with implementation of the treaty provisions. The council would be its decision-making body. The treaty would also create a secretariat to advise the council on matters of relevance to the treaty organization and to implement decisions of the treaty council. The treaty would provide for the accession of additional states upon invitation of the council and ratification by national governments; it would also have to grant contracting parties the right to withdraw within a short interval of renouncing the treaty, and it should include a mechanism to ensure that any member that abandons democracy can be excluded from future participation.

Without doubt, any proposal for a major new international institution has an idealistic and aspirational component to it. This has been true at least since Tennyson mused about "a Parliament of man, a Federation of the world" ushering in an era of common sense and universal law in "Locksley Hall," not to mention the fond hopes Woodrow Wilson pinned on his League of Nations as well as the similar hopes animating the drafters of the United Nations Charter. And of course the annals of 20th-century diplomatic history feature such notorious misfires as the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928, signed by Germany, Italy, and Japan as well as the United States, France, and the U.K., renouncing no less than "war as an instrument of national policy"—which remind us of the regular failure of such initiatives to live up to the aspirations of their proponents.

This treaty proposal certainly has its aspirational element as well. Yet it begins not with a dream but with the fact of democratic peace. It is not *merely* aspirational. It differs from the Kellogg-Briand Pact in a number of decisive ways. It is at best unclear that the Kellogg-Briand signatories were sincere in their undertakings, and in any case, little more than a decade had passed since a number of the signatories were at war with each other. In addition, the governments of a number of the parties to Kellogg-Briand were not democratic or were at best illiberal. India was "represented" by British imperial authorities. Italy still had its monarchy, Japan its emperor. By contrast, the parties to the Treaty of the Democratic Peace would be states that have long lived peacefully with each other, in some cases for two generations or more, and expect to continue to do so. They are mature, liberal democracies whose internal democratic processes have been tested by internal and external political shocks without disruption. They have a track record of working cooperatively on matters of mutual interest.

Given the current configuration of power politics internationally, the United States is a lonely "hyperpower" (in the coinage of former French foreign minister Hubert Védrine). Having explored the limits of unilateralism in the first Bush term, the second Bush administration has placed a much higher value on working with others, and future administrations are likely to make even more pronounced efforts along those lines. Decisions made in Washington ramify around the world in ways that are often discomfiting or worse to those affected by them but who have no say in them. This is never going to be a source of American popularity, including among democracies. Others want influence over the United States, and who can blame them? For them, the treaty body offers the forum in which, as Daalder and Lindsay note, the United States is most likely to be influenced: among like-minded democratic states seeking a basis for cooperative action.

Nevertheless, the historical record argues for a cautious approach and limited aspirations. The treaty should explicitly assign only the most general role to the treaty council and the secretariat. The institutional point is not to *assume* the treaty council and the secretariat will be playing major roles on the world stage, but to create these entities in order to respond to the needs of members as they see fit. It is quite possible that the treaty council and the secretariat will be rather sleepy places for some time. But they will be available for members to take action whenever the members themselves find utility in acting as a body of democracies. The NATO alliance was hardly founded with the expectation that member-states would one day convene at its Brussels headquarters to decide to undertake a combat mission in Afghanistan against Islamist extremists. That institution continues to prove its utility for members even though the threat the alliance was created to defend against is no more.

Insofar as a Treaty of the Democratic Peace affirmed a commitment to the spread of democratic principles and liberalization, there would seem to be an organic role for the council and secretariat to play in supporting states making transitions to democratic governance. It would be hard to imagine the council turning down a fledgling democracy's request for technical assistance and "best practices" guidance. A parallel example would be the process by which NATO became involved in Darfur. In early 2005, the North Atlantic Council found itself blocked from considering support for humanitarian operations there because of the view of some allies (notably France) that NATO had no business in Africa. Yet when a formal request for NATO's assistance came in from the African Union, which under U.N. mandate was providing a peacekeeping force in Darfur, the position of those allies opposed in the abstract

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to the idea of a NATO role in Africa became untenable.

Beyond offering such assistance when asked, the treaty council also might want to involve itself in work to promote democracy and liberalization and to support those working peacefully toward those ends. Here, of course, we enter a more controversial sphere of activity, as it is by no means clear that all the member states (or whatever majority of them would constitute the basis for a council decision) would want to risk antagonizing nondemocratic states by promoting activities that autocrats deem subversive. Nevertheless, in certain instances they might. The case of Ukraine 2004 comes to mind.

An essential element of the democracy promotion possible under the treaty would be its openness to new members. A state that demonstrates a commitment to democratic governance and declares its commitment to the democratic peace should be eligible for participation in a process that leads eventually to an invitation to join. This process should not be too hasty, insofar as the Treaty of the Democratic Peace would have its origins in the actual, demonstrated commitment of democratic states to live in peace with each other. But states should also receive benefits and encouragement for a genuine demonstration of an intention to accede. The treaty council could designate states in train for accession as eligible for observer status. With such status might come funds to assist with democratic transitions and democracy-building. Here is the potential for the global extension of the "attractive power" incentives of the E.U. and NATO.

Since the accession process would be intended to help and encourage states in transition to deepen their commitment to democracy, the treaty council, acting through the secretariat, might want to advise aspirant states about measures they should consider to improve their democratic governance. The council could also set conditions for eligibility and a process to evaluate potential members' candidacies on a country-by-country basis, as NATO and the E.U. have done.

In the end, since accession would be by invitation of the treaty council and ratification by national governments, the parties themselves would have final say on whether a country met the test of being truly democratic and truly committed to the democratic peace. Admission would be by democratic "peer review." The evaluation each national government would perform, taken collectively, would be a better test of how democratic an aspirant was than the application of an abstract set of criteria. This mechanism would likely prevent states about which genuine questions remain with regard to their commitment to democracy and the democratic peace from acceding to the treaty and diluting its essential character.

It would also be useful for the treaty to include a "sunset" provision on membership, according to which each country's accession would expire after a certain term of years, say seven or ten. Upon expiration of membership, and given a stated intention to rejoin, a country would take observer status pending a renewed invitation from the treaty council and re-ratification by national governments. Such a novel provision would provide an automatic policing arrangement for the treaty council in the event of a state's abandonment of either democracy or peaceableness. This would, in my view, be an improvement over any possible expulsion provision. The U.N. Charter has provisions (Articles 6 and 18) allowing the General Assembly, on recommendation of the Security Council, by two-thirds vote to expel a member for "persistently violat[ing] the Principles contained in the present Charter." Needless to say, the mechanism has never been deployed against even the most egregious aggressor or human rights violator. An expulsion provision in the Treaty of the Democratic Peace would likely be similarly toothless: Expulsion could never be automatic according to "objective" or technical criteria; it would require the positive action of the treaty council, which the U.N. experience suggests would be seldom obtained. A sunset provision on membership, on the other hand, would require an affirmative act of re-invitation according to those same procedures, followed by re-ratification by national governments. The ability of the council to let a state that has automatically dropped off remain out until genuinely qualified for readmission would be a strong enforcement mechanism and a powerful incentive for good behavior among members.

A question on which the success of the project as a whole would ultimately hinge is which states would be founding parties to the Treaty of the Democratic Peace. To be blunt, an effective means of excluding those states that would seek to participate without being truly committed to democracy or the democratic peace (even if they professed both) is essential. One plausible criterion is time: The initial contracting parties would be those that had been democratic and had lived at peace with one another for some lengthy period. How long would be critical. A 25-year test would exclude South Korea, for example. A test of longer than 12 years would exclude South Africa, but a 12-year test would raise the question of inclusion of the Russian Federation. Without attempting to be exhaustive, it seems to me that critical states for early buy-in would be India, Japan, South Africa, Brazil, South Korea, Australia, Mexico, and if possible France (to which the project should be presented as the vindication of Aristide Briand's vision)—as well as, obviously, the U.K., Canada, Germany, and other Euro-Atlantic allies.

But perhaps rather than trying to get exactly the right

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group around the table, no more and no less, a better approach would be to start with a very small group and have others come in through the accession mechanism. Suppose the initial group consisted of one nation from each continent. Such an approach would also provide a bypass around the potentially dicey problem of trying to evolve the overly inclusive Community of Democracies into a treaty body.

Suppose, further, that the founding North American nation was not the United States but Canada, with the United States holding back to join through the accession process. Such an act of self-restraint might help rebut the certain criticism that the project as a whole was no more than an American bid for special status in a forum in which it had more influence than others.

As to what other utility democracies might find in a body in which they acted together, one can speculate. The Princeton Project on National Security draft "Charter for a Concert of Democracies" explicitly constitutes the concert to serve as an alternative to the United Nations for legitimizing the use of force in relation to the "responsibility to protect," for example in Darfur. Here, the inability of the Security Council to take action to stop ethnic cleansing and unfolding genocide in Kosovo in 1998-99 also weighs heavily on the minds of many. NATO's decision to take military action against the Belgrade regime without U.N. authority has been, for some, a model of how democracies acting collectively provide legitimacy—albeit one that could be improved upon by an explicit charter of authority.

I think inclusion of an explicit provision related to the authorization of the use of force would make adoption of the treaty problematic if not impossible for many states. Many democracies assign the U.N. a unique role as bestower of international legitimacy and legality, and would see a treaty provision purporting to offer a backup mechanism for such legality or legitimacy as a deliberate attempt to undermine the U.N. For the same reason, my inclination would be not to favor a NATO "Article V"-style collective defense provision for the treaty. The intention behind the Treaty of the Democratic Peace is not to create a military alliance, or to legitimize U.S. military intervention.

If, indeed, the members of the treaty council ever wished to give an imprimatur to an intervention, nothing in the treaty would prevent them from doing so, so long as it was consistent with their other international obligations, including under the U.N. Charter. Likewise, if one of the parties to the Treaty of the Democratic Peace came under armed attack by a non-party, the treaty council could frame any response it wished, including an assertion that members regarded the attack as an attack on them all. For example, at a summit of ten NATO aspirant countries in Sofia, Bulgaria, in October 2001, the group jointly declared that they regarded the 9/11 attack on the United States as an attack on themselves as well: They declared themselves "allies in fact" if not yet by treaty. Nothing required them to do so but their own sense of the ethical imperative of the moment.

Many other details would need to be worked out by treaty drafters. The procedure governing the decision-making process of the council is an obvious one. Should decisions be by majority, by majority weighted for population, by supermajority, or by consensus? There must not, of course, be veto powers, à la the Security Council. NATO employs a "silence" procedure, according to which no action is taken while any stated objection is pending. Given the central objective of enhancing cooperation among democracies, perhaps a novel "consensus-minus" procedure might be appropriate, according to which the treaty council would seek silence (i.e., no overt objection), but in which a state could break silence only in concert with another state. You could not object only for yourself. The idea would be to ensure that particular local circumstances or historical grievances did not impede the function of the treaty council. The question of Turkey's view of Armenia's accession, or vice versa, comes to mind. No single state would be able to block action. Such a provision would, of course, equally prevent the United States from blocking action.

There is also the question of where the treaty council and secretariat should be headquartered. A location outside the Euro-Atlantic area would be highly desirable. Plausible contenders include Tokyo (or elsewhere in Japan), New Delhi (or elsewhere in India), and Johannesburg (or elsewhere in South Africa). Establishing a funding mechanism for the institution would likely be no less fraught than funding other international bodies—with the exception that the democratic and peaceable character of the participating states would be a source of some measure of mutual goodwill.

Again, one must be modest in one's aspirations. If the time is not right for democracies to formalize their peaceable intentions in a globe-spanning treaty that envisions working cooperatively on matters of mutual interest and concern, we will likely find out sooner rather than later from a serious diplomatic effort to promote the idea. And if the time is right, though it would surely take more than one administration to bring the treaty to fruition, we would equally likely see indications of its viability. For those committed to liberal democracy as the legitimizing principle of government at home, now is the time to put the global commitment to the democratic peace and to cooperation among the like-minded to the test. ♦

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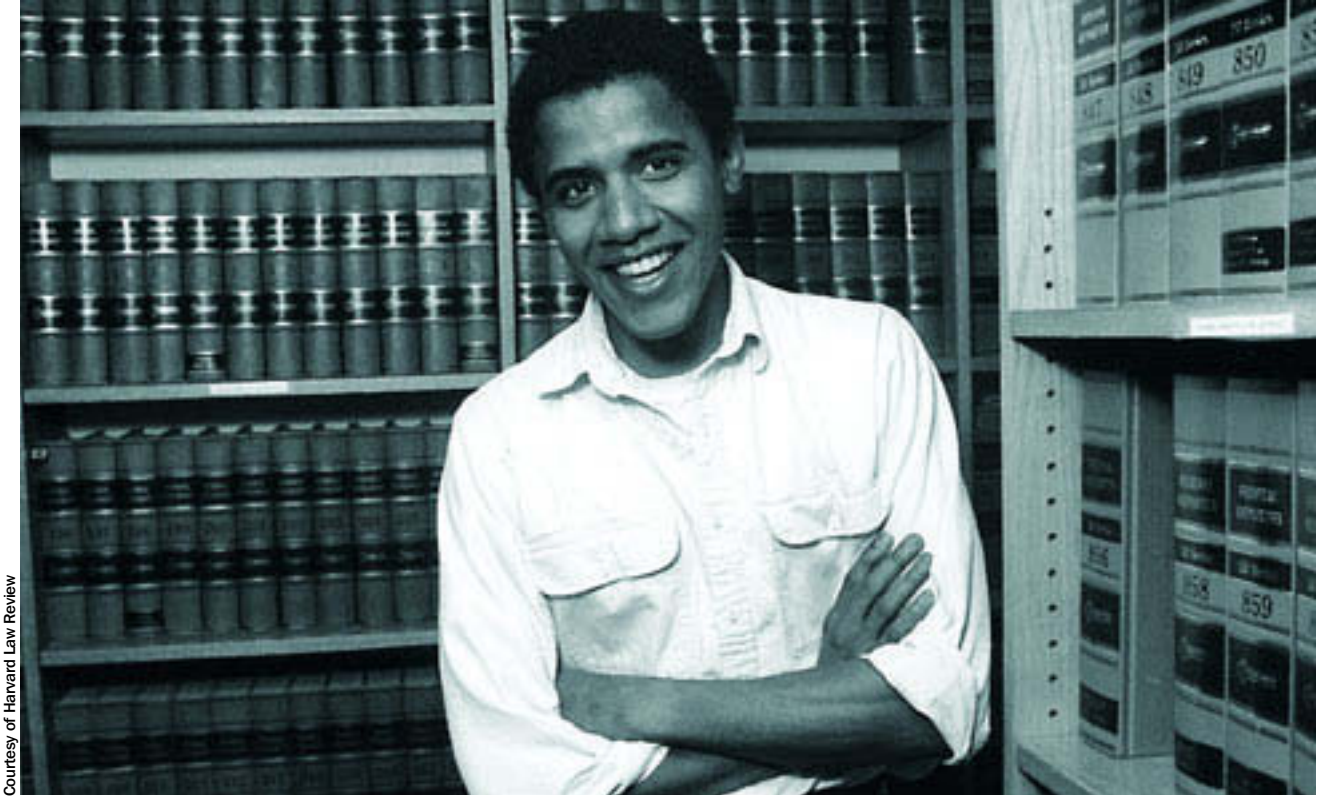

Courtesy of Harvard Law Review

Barack Obama at Harvard Law School, 1990

The Literary Obama

From eloquent memoir to Democratic boilerplate BY ANDREW FERGUSON

Barack Obama ran for president of *Harvard Law Review* in 1990, and in an early testament to the winning ways that have recently dazzled a fair percentage of the American public, the *Review*'s editors elected him by an impressive majority. As the first black law student to hold the job, he was soon enjoying a mild percolation of celebrity: stories in the *New York Times* and *Time*, a smattering of TV interviews, requests to appear at conferences, and then, as day follows night, the calls from book publishers and literary agents, asking him to write a book telling the world what it was like to be him. Obama hired an agent and signed a deal and set about writing.

Four years after his graduation, *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance* appeared, emerging into what many of us recall as a madcap season in the long sad history of American book publishing. Sometime in the early nineties, editors and publishers had persuaded one another that contracting with large numbers of 30-year-olds to write detailed accounts of their young lives was a good idea. It was not a good idea, however. By 1995, unreadable memoirs were suddenly everywhere. The books didn't vary much in quality, and only superficially in subject matter. They ranged from the depressed reminiscences of young, unhinged white women with drug problems (*Prozac Nation* by Elizabeth Wurtzel) to the angry reminiscences of young, unhinged black men with drug problems (*Makes Me Wanna Holler* by Nathan McCall).

Dreams from My Father
A Story of Race and Inheritance
by Barack Obama
Three Rivers, 480 pp., $14.95

The Audacity of Hope
Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream
by Barack Obama
Crown, 384 pp., $25

It is less of a compliment than the book deserves to say that *Dreams from My Father* was much better than the mid-'90s average.

Yet it was not the book Obama intended to write; he hadn't intended to write a memoir at all. On the evidence, he lacks the solipsistic urge that propelled youngsters like Wurtzel and McCall deep into a glowering contemplation of their innermost, uninteresting selves. What young Obama hoped to write, instead, he later said, was an abstract, high-altitude examination of American race relations, surveying the uses and limits of civil rights litigation, the meaning of Afro-centrism, and so on, flavored now and then with anec-

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dotes drawn from his own experience as the only son of a white woman from Kansas and a black man from Kenya.

Yet it was the anecdotes that spurred his interest and kept drawing him back to pen and paper—stories and impressions of his parents and grandparents, childhood pals, and colleagues from school and work. Next to this human material, "all my well-ordered theories seemed insubstantial and premature."

So he wrote a memoir. *Dreams from My Father* was favorably reviewed, got respectfully discussed here and there, and then, as books do, went the way of all pulp. "Sales," Obama later wrote, "were underwhelming. And after a few months I went on with the business of my life, certain that my career as an author would be short-lived." In his adopted hometown of Chicago he taught classes at a law school and plunged into electoral politics. He ran for state senate and won, ran for Congress and lost, ran for the U.S. Senate and, before winning in a landslide, delivered a booming speech at the 2004 Democratic National Convention that made several news anchors weep, though this is not so difficult as it sounds.

In its second go-round, celebrity has come to Barack Obama less as a percolation than a volcanic eruption. *Dreams* was reissued in paperback and has been on the *New York Times* bestseller list for 61 weeks. And after his election to the U.S. Senate, Obama wrote another book, *The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream*. It has been atop the bestseller list for four months.

The Audacity of Hope is a lot like the book that young Obama originally hoped to write when he wrote *Dreams*, before he was distracted by his memories of the people with whom he's shared his life. *Audacity* is high-minded and abstract, pumped with the helium of political rhetoric and discussions about policy—health care or budgeting, for example—that seem just serious enough to bore any reader except someone who knows enough about policy to find them tendentious and superficial. Spiked with folksy touches and potted anecdotes, *Audacity* is the work of a professional politician under the careful watch of his advisers, a campaign book only marginally more memorable, though much better written, than such classics of the genre as John Kerry's *A Call to Service* or George W. Bush's *A Charge to Keep*.

Read together, back to back, Obama's two books illuminate each other. They trace a narrative arc of their own, as the writer of the first book—the dreamy, painfully sensitive, funny, and not quite wised-up memoirist—slowly fades from view behind the gummy presence of the author of the second, the careful, ingratiating main chancer. *Audacity* is an infinitely weaker, duller book than its predecessor, and its single interesting revelation is unintentional: In this most perilous age, when our great country strives for direction in a world of crisscrossing riptides and dangerous undertow, we have lost a writer and gained another politician. It's not a fair trade.

Dreams tells the story of Obama's life up to his matriculation at Harvard. The outlines of his biography are quickly becoming well known, thanks to coverage of the already overheated presidential campaign. Obama's mother, Ann Dunham, met his father at the University of Hawaii, to which the father (also named Barack) had come as an exchange student. They married in 1960, and young Barack arrived soon after. The father left wife and son when Barack was two, returning to his native Kenya after a few semesters in a doctoral program at Harvard. Barack's mother remarried when Barack, now called Barry, was six. Her new husband moved the new blended family to Indonesia. In Jakarta, Barry attended private schools, two years at a Catholic school, two more at a private school with a predominately Muslim student population.

When his mother's second marriage fell apart, Barry was sent back to Hawaii to live with his grandparents while his mother continued graduate studies in Indonesia. He won a scholarship to a fancy prep school in Waikiki, then another to Occidental College in Los Angeles, and finished his last two years of college at Columbia. He moved to Chicago to be a "community organizer" on the South Side. After three years he headed to Harvard Law.

It's not, on its face, the stuff of a great memoir. But against all expectation, the book never flags. I don't think anyone who reads it could doubt that *Dreams from My Father* is the work of a real writer; a *young* writer, it's true, with a young writer's mannerisms. The story as he tells it is a bit overstuffed with epiphanies; one event after another sends waves of significance through the narrator's vast reservoir of sensibility. And though he's a graceful and sure-handed stylist, Obama has a weakness for the dying fall; many of his sentences are so grandly bittersweet, so summarily touching, you could imagine them as the last lines of a Tennessee Williams play.

But these are problems that come from an excess of talent rather than its lack. And there is also the refreshing presence of Obama's own personality, sufficiently detached and amused to play off his shortcomings, and modest enough to tell much of his story through characters other than himself, older and more experienced than the callow narrator, though not necessarily wiser or more hardened to the knockabouts of life.

And he makes these characters breathe; they change and grow and, in several instances, turn inward and recede under the pressure of events. The preeminent male presence in his memoir is his maternal grandfather. Gramps is a restless veteran of World War II who pushed his family from Kansas steadily westward in pursuit of the Big Score until he ran out of continent and made the leap to Hawaii where, among other hopeless ventures, he opened a furniture franchise.

Gramps first appears in *Dreams* as a Micawber of postwar America, genial and enthusiastic even when the odds look long. But then a gloom settles over him as time runs out and his possibilities narrow for good. By the time Barry is a teenager his grandfather is selling insurance, making cold calls from the living room where a TV tray doubles as his desk.

> Sometimes I would tiptoe into the kitchen for a soda, and I could hear the

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desperation creeping into his voice, the stretch of silence that followed when the people on the other end explained why Thursday wasn't good and Tuesday not much better, and then Gramps's heavy sigh after he had hung up the phone, his hands fumbling through the files in his lap like those of a cardplayer who's deep in the hole.

Having lost his dreams of business success, the chief goal of Gramps's life seems to be to inject some steadiness into the zigs and zags of his grandson's childhood. It's another lost cause, thanks to the spectral presence of Barry's vanished father. In the boy's imagination the father has grown to mythic dimensions. He tells his classmates his father is an African prince, traveling in golden chariots and leading a tribe that builds pyramids on the banks of the Nile. The name Obama, he says, means "Burning Spear." For all he knows it might even be true—until one day when a local librarian helps him find a book that mentions the Luo tribe. These are his father's people and, he hopes, his own.

"The Luo merited only a short paragraph," he discovers. "The Luo raised cattle and lived in mud huts and ate corn meal and yams and something called millet. Their traditional costume was a leather thong across the crotch. I left the book open-faced on a table and walked out without thanking the librarian."

When Barry is ten, his father returns to Hawaii to visit. He is tall, slender, and frail, bespectacled and limping—not a prince at all. The month he spends is to be their only time together—his father died in a car crash in Kenya a decade later—and it is made brittle and uncomfortable by resentments and betrayals among the adults.

Obama's aching account of the visit ends, as is his wont, with an epiphany, but most of Obama's epiphanies are moments not just of clarity but also of disillusion. As he grows up one source of consolation after another runs dry. Many of these disappointments involve race, of course, and the degree of sympathy one can muster for the president of the *Harvard Law Review* in his various tales of woe will vary from reader to reader. But Obama is the shrewdest of memoirists. He won't let himself, or his reader, off easy. As a teenager he befriends Ray, another African-American boy who vents his authentic black rage between classes at their prep school, as the ocean breezes stir the towering palms overhead. This black rage was "the thing that Ray and I never could seem to agree on . . .

Obama and friends, 2006

VII / Christopher Morris

> Our rage at the white world needed no object, he seemed to be telling me, no independent confirmation; it could be switched on and off at our pleasure. Sometimes . . . I would question his judgment, if not his sincerity. We weren't living in the Jim Crow South, I would remind him. We weren't consigned to some heatless housing project in Harlem or the Bronx. We were in goddamned Hawaii. We said what we pleased, ate where we pleased; we sat at the front of the proverbial bus. None of our white friends treated us any differently than they treated each other. They loved us, and we loved them back. Shit, seemed like half of 'em wanted to be black themselves—or at least Dr. J.
>
> Well, that's true, Ray would admit.
>
> Maybe we could afford to give the bad-assed nigger pose a rest. Save it for when we really needed it.

The full truth about Obama's father turns out to be much sadder and more pathetic than he could have imagined. It's revealed at the end of the book, when our memoirist, now in his early twenties and having proudly reclaimed his given name Barack, travels to Kenya to meet his paternal grandmother and cousins, as well as his half-brothers and half-sisters whom his father has scattered around Kenya. By now Barack has shed his dependence on the myth of his old man, yet he still fumbles for some other consolation to steady himself and locate his place in the world.

The promises of religion ring false to him. Drugs and drink don't help for long. He's unlucky in love. Succumbing briefly to the pre-packaged racial alienation of the post-civil rights generation, he gives it up in the end, when he sees how the rage, genuine or not, destroys other black friends, including kids even more privileged than he. Marcus, for example, his best friend at Occidental and, for a while, an ambitious student until "he took to wearing African prints to class and started lobbying the administration for an all-black dormitory. Later, he grew uncommunicative. He began to skip classes, hitting the reefer more heavily. He let his beard grow out, let his hair work its way into dreadlocks." Marcus slips away. If black rage ever seemed a plausible approach to him, Obama's last glimpse of his friend, playing the bongos at a street fair in Compton, seems to foreclose the possibility: "Through the haze of smoke that surrounded him, his face was expressionless; his eyes were narrow, as if he were trying to shut out the sun. For almost an hour I watched him play without rhythm or nuance, just pounding the hell out of those drums, beating back untold memories."

One faith that he acquires early and never manages to shake, not completely, is his faith in politics. In *Dreams*, especially after he moves to Chicago to become a "community organizer," it's

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a particular kind of politics that appeals to him: localized, intimate, small scale, "grassroots," to use the cant phrase, a matter of the tenants association and the shop floor rather than the state house or the convention hall. Yet even this kind of politics has its misdirections and dead ends. The greatest pleasure of the memoir is the way Obama is always willing to let reality confound him and his reader. His writerly conscience never gives him a break: Just when you worry he's going to lapse into cliché—and, not incidentally, flatter his readers by allowing them to slip into a clichéd response—he pulls the rug out.

Often his good guys prove unreliable, weak, or corrupt, and villains are never quite as villainous as they seem at first, like the slumlord Barack leads into a legal trap: "There was part of me that wanted to warn him off. I had the unsettling feeling that his soul was familiar to me, that of an older man who feels betrayed by life—a look I had seen so often in my grandfather's eyes." Obama has the most essential of the writer's gifts: He has sympathy and fellow feeling; he never settles for seeing people from the outside in.

Once in a while, reading *Dreams*, I stopped to ask myself how it was that such a beautiful, exquisitely wrought book could fail to find readers on its first appearance ten years ago. I know, I know: Lots of beautiful, exquisitely wrought books fail to find an audience. I wonder, though, whether it might not have been a failure of salesmanship, or of a publisher's blinkered misreading. Even now some reviewers and critics insist that *Dreams* is essentially a racial memoir. And it is, I guess, in the sense that *Anna Karenina* is a meditation on the power of locomotives in czarist Russia.

Obama's themes are universal—far grander and more enduring than the difficulties of American race relations. His memoir is about the crosswise love between fathers and sons, the limits of ambition and memory, the struggle between the intellect and the heart. And what gives the book its special force is the writer's own sensitivity: He teases his themes only out of the experience of real human beings. He relies on the power of the particular. He shuns abstraction and the easy generality. The author of *Dreams from My Father* is after bigger game.

The game he hunts now, ten years later, is political power, and it was with an eye toward the White House that his second book was written. I say that the writer of *Dreams* disappears behind the pol of *Audacity*, but that's not completely true. He's still here. Barack Obama might be able to write a bad book if he tried hard enough, and there are signs in *The Audacity of Hope* that he's trying very hard indeed; but flashes of brilliance show through even so—in a physical description of the Illinois prairie, or a thumbnail sketch of President Bush in conversation, or a disarming moment of self-deprecation, as when he admits his happy acquiescence in reciting focus-group-approved bromides given him by his political handlers.

The real problem with *The Audacity of Hope* (aside from the portentous, meaningless title) is that Obama's gifts of observation and sympathy have been reduced to the realm of the political, and it's a bad fit. Already his habit of seeing every side of every question—the writerly habit that rescued his memoir from stereotype and cliché—has begun to frustrate many of his would-be allies. The liberal journalist Joe Klein, writing in *Time*, says he "counted no fewer than 50 instances of excruciatingly judicious on-the-one-hand-on-the-other-handedness in *The Audacity of Hope*." Articles in the *New York Review of Books* and *Harper's* quote the book and fret over his tendency to "equivocation."

And there are points where the tendency does verge on self-parody. He proudly notes that he voted against the nomination of the perfectly unobjectionable John Roberts; then he proudly notes he wrote to the left-wing blog Daily Kos to attack its attacks on Democrats who had voted for Roberts. The book is a long self-advertisement for his own reasonableness, along with expressions of disappointment at the unreasonableness of everyone else: He's not only against John Roberts, he's against people who are against John Roberts.

The book opens with a kind of personal catechism: "Undoubtedly, some of these views will get me in trouble," he warns us. So stand back: "I insist that government has an important role in opening up opportunity for all," he says. "I believe in evolution, scientific inquiry, and global warming; I believe in free speech, whether politically correct or politically incorrect, and I am suspicious of using government to impose anybody's religious beliefs—including my own—on nonbelievers."

Had enough? Too bad:

"I believe in the free market, competition, and entrepreneurship, and think no small number of government programs don't work as advertised. . . . I carry few illusions about our enemies, and revere the courage and competence of our military. I reject a politics that is based solely on racial identity, gender identity, sexual orientation, or victimhood generally."

You can almost see the nostrils flare in self-congratulation. "I suspect that some readers may find my presentation of these issues insufficiently balanced." Unlikely.

The *conclusions*, though, are another matter. Those frustrated would-be allies like Joe Klein shouldn't worry. On one practical issue after another, at the end of long, tortured passages of chin-pulling and brow-furrowing, after the unexpected praise for Ronald Reagan and for the genius of the free market, the disdain for identity politics and for the overregulation of small business, there's never a chance that Obama will come down on any side other than the conventionally liberal views of the Democratic party mainstream. It turns out that much of his on-the-one-hand judiciousness is little more than a rhetorical strategy.

He tut-tuts over the simplistic caricatures that shape our politics—on both the left and the right, needless to say. He insists: "I know very few elected Democrats who neatly fit the liberal caricature; the last I checked, John Kerry believes in maintaining the superiority of the U.S. military, Hillary

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Clinton believes in the virtues of capitalism"—and so on.

Judicious readers might be more willing to take his word for it if this passage didn't follow one that claimed the "ideological core of today's GOP is . . . an ideology of no taxes, no regulation, no safety net—indeed no government beyond what's required to protect private property and provide for the national defense . . . a movement that insists . . . that a particular, fundamentalist brand of [Christianity] should drive public policy, overriding any alternative source of understanding, whether the writings of liberal theologians, the findings of the National Academy of Sciences, or the words of Thomas Jefferson."

An admirer of *Dreams from My Father* can only marvel at the crudity of passages like this. Has there ever been a better display of the destructive effects—the *miniaturizing* effects—of professional politics? For the only thing that separates the writer of the one book from the writer of the other is ten years of life as a politician. You're not ten pages into *The Audacity of Hope* before you begin to long for the writer of that earlier memoir—an artist, really—who never bragged of his contempt for caricature but still managed to demonstrate it on every page. Because Obama remains such an appealing figure, you want to wave him off (for his own good!) and to thrust his own memoir at him, and to remind him of a lovely passage on page 209.

In it he introduces his half-sister Auma to some old ladies he's befriended in his work as a community organizer in Chicago.

> "They seem very fond of you," Auma said afterward. . . . "Are you doing this for them, Barack?" she asked, turning back to me. "This organizing business, I mean?"
>
> I shrugged. "For them. For me."
>
> That same expression of puzzlement, and fear, returned to Auma's face. "I don't like politics much," she said.
>
> "Why's that?"
>
> "I don't know. People always end up disappointed." ♦

Old Possum Renewed

Craig Raine's appreciation of Eliot's life and work.

BY EDWARD SHORT

For the bookmen who ruled literary London in the years after World War I, T.S. Eliot was an absurdity. Arthur Waugh spoke for many of his generation when he wrote of the innovative poet: "It was a classic custom in the family hall, when a feast was at its height, to display a drunken slave among the sons of the household, to the end that they, being ashamed at the ignominious folly of his gesticulations, might determine never to be tempted into such a pitiable condition themselves. The custom has its advantages; for the wisdom of the younger generation was found to be fostered more surely by a single example than by a world of homily and precept." In *A Little Learning*, Evelyn Waugh remarked of his father's not altogether joking jest: "This was the function he predicted for the future idol of the academies."

T.S. Eliot
by Craig Raine
Oxford, 224 pp., $21

Yet, from the 1920s until the '60s, Eliot's influence was immense. As poet, critic, and publisher, he set the literary standards of his age as decisively as Samuel Johnson had set those of his. Poets and critics around the world put themselves to school to his exacting discriminations. Then, with the collapse of academic standards in the 1960s and the rise of postmodernism, Eliot fell out of favor. If Arthur Waugh wanted him exhibited as a literary delinquent whose antics should dissuade the young from preposterous experimentation, the custodians of the new political correctness continue to hold him up as an example of anti-Semitism, misogyny, and fascism.

Edward Short is writing a book about John Henry Newman and his contemporaries.

The editors of Oxford's "Lives and Legacies" series should be commended for commissioning the poet and critic Craig Raine to revisit Eliot's work. Raine's contribution will usher in a more balanced assessment of a man who hardly deserves the obloquy to which he has been subjected. In the same series Paul Addison rescued Churchill from his detractors; Raine has done an equally adroit job of rescuing Eliot.

Raine is a shrewd, learned, and entertaining critic. His readings of "The Waste Land" (1922), "The Hollow Men" (1925), and "Ash Wednesday" (1930) reacquaint us with a dazzling poet. He shows Eliot's work preoccupied first and last with the "buried life," a theme that Eliot borrowed from a poem by Matthew Arnold, whom Raine convincingly depicts as Eliot's "poetic father figure." From *Prufrock* (1917) to *The Elder Statesman* (1958), Eliot plumbed what Arnold called "the unregarded River of our Life." But whereas Arnold saw only unfelt emotions in the "buried life," Eliot saw things "more distant than the stars and nearer than the eye"; "time present and time past"; "motives late revealed"; "the intolerable wrestle with words and meanings"; and perhaps most insistently, "the loud lament of the disconsolate chimera." Here is a thesis that elucidates the full range of Eliot's art.

Eliot rebelled against Arnold's influence by extolling what he considered the classical virtues of reason and objectivity against the romantic vices of emotionalism and subjectivity. This is why he called himself a

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"classicist in literature." It is also at the heart of his idea of the "objective correlative," his insistence, as Raine says, that "the emotion of a character should be bodied forth in the action"—as Lady Macbeth's guilt is bodied forth in her sleepwalking. In *After Strange Gods* (1933), Eliot described some of the characteristic fallacies of romantic art: "It is a cardinal point of faith in a romantic age to believe that there is something admirable in violent emotion for its own sake." Worse, "many people act upon the assumption that the mere accumulation of 'experiences,' including literary and intellectual experiences, as well as amorous and picaresque ones, is—like the accumulation of money—valuable in itself." For Eliot this would ensure, as it has ensured, a meretricious art judged not on its objective merits but on the acceptability of its experiences, its "point of view." And, indeed, it is in accordance with such subjective standards that Eliot's own art is now misjudged.

Eliot never depreciated emotion per se. As a young man he might have famously asserted, "Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality." Yet even in that early essay, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919), he was careful to qualify: "But, of course, only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from these things." Eliot was skeptical of emotions not because he felt them too little but because he felt them too much. This is why renunciation had such an appeal for him, and why, in so many of his poems, that appeal is met with prayer.

For example, in "Marina" (1930):

> *This form, this face, this life*
> *Living to live in a world of time beyond me; let me*
> *Resign my life for this life, my speech for that unspoken,*
> *The awakened, lips parted, the hope, the new ships.*

Many have been baffled or repulsed by Eliot's spirituality. His conversion to the Church of England in 1927 continues to be seen in many quarters as an act of reactionary deviance. Some have even suggested that between the subversive poet and the orthodox critic there was something almost schizophrenic. In the undeniable inconsistencies of Eliot's work, Raine sees not schizophrenia but honesty.

Bettmann / Corbis

T.S. Eliot, 1948

> His attitude to religion was publicly uncompromising: he didn't want religion to make any compromise with the secular impulse. In "Religion and Literature" (1935), he is certain that modern literature is "simply unaware of, simply cannot understand the meaning of, the primacy of the supernatural over the natural life." "Ash Wednesday" argues precisely this position—the primacy of the supernatural over the natural life—and fails. It is possible to argue that, therefore, the poetry is truer to reality than Eliot's theoretical position. But the difficulty of true religion was precisely what attracted Eliot. Its requirements are intractable, absolute—and difficult to fulfill. Were they not difficult, they would not be worth struggling towards.

Regarding the charge of anti-Semitism leveled at Eliot by Anthony Julius, George Steiner, and Louis Menand, Raine demonstrates that it has been brought by malice. In addition to being sloppy prosecutors, Julius and his friends are incompetent critics. "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar" (1920), for example, as Raine shows, "is not an anti-Semitic poem, but a poem about anti-Semitism." Eliot's critics need to familiarize themselves with the dramatic monologue. (If their reasoning were applied to other poets, the authors of "My Last Duchess" and "The Farmer's Bride" would have to be charged with very dark inclinations.)

Raine's sympathy for his subject is not unqualified. He scoffs at what Eliot called "dissociation of sensibility," or his theory that, between Donne and Tennyson, thought and feeling parted company and never reunited. For Raine, "Eliot's theory is surely a myth—almost Wildean in its sacrifice of rigour to éclat." Most readers would agree. The poetry of Pope, Johnson, Clare, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Browning, and even Tennyson makes mincemeat of such a theory. Raine is equally dismissive of Eliot's theory that "genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood":

> If you do not speak a language, you may communicate by bodily gesture—smiling or tearing your hair—because these gestures are understood. But without any understanding, no communication is possible. You are in Tblisi airport. You don't speak Georgian. An announcement in Georgian on the (expressionless, unsmiling) public address system tells you that your luggage has gone to Riga rather than Heathrow. At that moment, you won't get the joke.

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You won't see the funny side until much later.

This is amusing but unpersuasive. Poetry is not analogous to an announcement on a public address system. Its meaning extends beyond the whereabouts of luggage. Poetry that also happens to be difficult—Eliot's own poetry is a good example—*must* communicate before it is understood: Not, perhaps, most of its meaning, but enough to prompt the reader to reread, attend more closely, delve more deeply. Understanding, like the knowledge it attempts to acquire, is a matter of degrees. If the meaning of poetry could be communicated only *after* it was understood, our aesthetic experience should be radically impoverished. After all, not knowing a thing, finding it mystifying, is often as much a part of understanding as knowing a thing. We know that we do not know. But this is a quibble.

Raine is more frequently right than wrong. He is right to see that what the postmodernist academy finds most objectionable about Eliot is the "fundamental polarity" he proposes between "a theological view of the world, in which every action is significant and carries moral consequence, and a humanist view of the world, in which every action is drained of significance because there is neither salvation nor damnation, neither a heaven nor a hell, only moral opinion."

Elsewhere he says, accurately enough: "I think Eliot writes acutely about sex—in all its variety. He does acute justice to the variety of its disappointments." There is no more honest catalogue of the sorrows of sex than "The Waste Land." In another passage, he says that "Eliot's religious writings demonstrate the angularity and awkwardness, the unbiddable intransigence of sincere belief." This is true; there was nothing of the Vicar of Bray in Eliot. As his *Selected Essays* (1951) show, he enjoyed going against the grain.

In excavating the buried life of T.S. Eliot's art, Raine uncovers the unfamiliar compound ghost of genius. He has written a book that all Eliot fans and all Eliot foes will want to read. ♦

Red Alert

A Blue journalist misunderstands America.

BY GERARD ALEXANDER

Thomas Edsall admires conservatives the way some gourmets admire McDonald's: He respects how efficiently they do it even while hating what they do.

Edsall, a longtime *Washington Post* political reporter now at the *New Republic* and the Columbia Journalism School, has produced his latest in a series of books chronicling the rise of the modern conservative movement. As with any such lengthy engagement with one subject, the book holds a mirror up to the artist as well, in this case to a political culture pervasive in contemporary liberalism. Edsall argues that the GOP has become America's predominant party in part by benefiting from key structural changes to our economy and society, but also by crafting a coalition that is internally cohesive, technically proficient, and able to keep political debate organized around issues that unite conservatives and divide liberals.

Building Red America
The New Conservative Coalition and the Drive for Permanent Power
by Thomas B. Edsall
Basic Books, 320 pp., $26

So even when Republicans lose, as they did last November, Edsall expects them to rebound. Not for nothing do other liberals consider Edsall a pessimist.

But animosity clouds his analysis. He comes to three striking conclusions that do not withstand scrutiny. He claims that conservatives have won partly because they are highly regimented, that today's Republican coalition is best understood as a bundle of prejudices, and that Republicans play dirtier than Democrats. He also claims, more interestingly, that greater freedom for market forces has favored Republicans and that Democratic leaders are too culturally liberal to play in the heartland. But these are lost in what amount to gross misportrayals of left/right politics in America.

The notion that conservatism's resurgence resulted from a top-down, highly coordinated strategy has become pervasive among liberals, who have responded by trying to create a coordinated political "infrastructure" of their own and to centralize the funding of progressive groups through organizations like the Democracy Alliance. Reflecting this thinking, Edsall says that conservatives have created a "highly coordinated network of individuals and organizations—with a shared stake in a strong, centralized political machine" and even a "system," in the singular.

This suggests, for example, that conservatives efficiently divvied up America's different sectors or electorates—gun-owners, antiabortion activists, tax cutters, and so on—and created an organization to mobilize each one. This is an explanation of modern conservatism that only a New Dealer could love.

To be sure, coordination can add value in politics, especially at the tactical level. But the historical record suggests that conservatism hasn't even been a house of many rooms; it's been a village of squabbling neighbors. This wasn't because no one had a plan for building a robust conservative movement, but because too many people had divergent plans. The result was

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Sygma / Corbis / J.P. Laffont

'Explo 72,' Dallas, 1972

fractiousness and competition. Rival groups pursued distinct domestic and foreign policy agendas, disagreed over strategies, competed for donors, jealously guarded mailing lists, erupted in personality clashes, and found their voices in diverse and bickering center-right magazines and columnists.

Moreover, and despite Grover Norquist's celebrated claim that diverse conservative goals are mutually compatible, different groups' agendas have often proven directly competing and sometimes mutually exclusive. That's why conservative activists in even single-issue areas like abortion or national security formed dozens of competing organizations. Any tight division of labor that we might detect in retrospect is largely an illusion.

In fact, it's illusory even now, since competition is ongoing. Just ask James Dobson's Focus on the Family, Gary Bauer's American Values, the National Evangelical Association, the Eagle Forum, the Family Research Council, the National Right to Life Committee, Concerned Women for America, the American Family Association, and the Southern Baptist Convention—and that's just Christian conservative organizations at the national level. For just such reasons, David Brooks has argued that conservatism's house is divided but stronger for it. All this makes ironic Edsall's lament that the Democratic party "is really a bunch of competitive interests."

So what glue holds together the Republican coalition? Edsall draws on a long line of political commentary and academic research to portray modern American conservatism as a bundle of prejudices and dislikes against minorities and the poor. Foremost, he argues that conservatism is in many ways the heir to George Wallace's electoral base and policy agenda. Conservatives are also reacting against women's liberation. The combination leads Edsall to say succinctly that conservatives aim at "unraveling or reversing the rights revolutions of the 1960s." The Republican party is also where the economically dominant reside, and Edsall notes conservatives' "contempt for the weak." So Republicans are the party of the social, economic, and racial haves, fending off and even exploiting diverse have-nots.

The problems with this interpretation are legion. Historically, Republicans became a competitive and then dominant party in presidential politics by winning "peripheral" southern states like Texas and Florida where racial politics loomed far smaller than in the Deep South. And they did so by attracting votes first, most, and most durably in the South among the more educated, affluent, and urban and suburban voters who formed the GOP's base elsewhere in the country.

That is not Wallaceism. Even less racist are major Republican initiatives to attract Hispanics, and overwhelming support among average Republican voters in 2006 for black candidates like Michael Steele, Kenneth Blackwell, and Lynn Swann. As for Edsall's claim that, even now, conservatives want to reverse the civil rights movement, George Will says, "Please. Who favors rolling back guarantees of voting rights and equal access to public accommodations?" By the same standard, women hold leadership and staff positions throughout the conservative movement. In Edsall's accusations, we are in the realm of either fantasy or demagoguery.

But there's a deeper problem with his analysis. By portraying conservatives the way he does, Edsall is saying that members of the conservative coalition are motivated by narrow self-interest. Whites, males, straights, and the economically comfortable are simply out for themselves, often seeking gains at the expense of others. That's why conservatives oppose affirmative action and gay marriage, are tough on crime, and want to cut taxes and slash welfare. But it is important that Edsall barely discusses foreign policy, which he acknowledges he hasn't covered as a reporter.

Throughout the Cold War, and especially after Vietnam, strong anti-communism and interventionism were distinguishing conservative characteristics. Conservatives and liberals may have clashed on national security policies, but surely these were disagreements about what was in the public interest. This matters because, if we acknowledge the possibility that conservatives had public interests in mind when it came to foreign policy, we risk the parallel possibility that they also supported deregulation, tax cuts, welfare reform, and toughness on crime

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for publicly interested reasons. It is astonishing and sobering to think that, after all these years, conservatives still need to make the case to people like Thomas Edsall that liberals do not have a monopoly on seeking the common good.

This makes it all the more striking that Edsall also explains conservative success in terms of Republicans' greater political ruthlessness. He describes Democrats as "less aggressive" and approvingly quotes a Democrat saying that "Liberals by their very nature don't get as angry as conservatives do." Apparently, Republicans were tougher than Democrats during the 2000 Florida recount, regularly "Swift boat" their opponents, and turn out their own base voters by carefully researching their "anger points" and then cynically polarizing national politics.

It takes a special kind of cocoon to believe that any party has a monopoly on power-seeking ends and shifty means. In this case, that cocoon involves not associating the Daily Kos's huge audience with pervasive anger on the left, never mentioning brutal Democratic electioneering tactics, and not recognizing that Democrats routinely mobilize base voters with scare tactics such as Al Gore's election-eve charge in 2000 that George Bush might appoint Supreme Court justices who see African Americans as three-fifths of a human being.

Edsall doesn't seem to realize that to say that only Republicans talk relentlessly from talking points is a relentlessly repeated Democratic talking point. To accuse conservatives of being distinctively motivated by anger and prejudice is, itself, an expression of anger and prejudice. This is one of those rare arguments that, in the course of being made, disproves itself. At most, Edsall concedes that Democrats have been forced to toughen up by Republican practices. Perhaps the implication is that Terry McAuliffe and Chuck Schumer were soft touches before Lee Atwater and Karl Rove smacked them around.

Once upon a time, it took reality to mug a liberal. Now all it takes is a few Republican campaign consultants. ♦

Evil's Autopsy

A philosopher looks back at the 20th-century utopias.

BY PAUL HOLLANDER

Leszek Kolakowski is probably best known outside his native Poland for his three-volume history of Marxism (*Main Currents of Marxism*), first published in 1978 in English and in a one-volume edition two years ago. He left Poland in 1968, following his expulsion from the Communist party and the banning of his publications. Subsequently, he taught at various distinguished American, British, and Canadian universities and was a senior research fellow at All Souls College, Oxford, between 1970 and his retirement in 1995.

My Correct Views on Everything
by Leszek Kolakowski
St. Augustine's, 284 pp., $32

This carefully edited volume offers an excellent and representative sampling of Kolakowski's writings spanning his entire career. They address and illuminate virtually every major historical, philosophical, and political problem and polemic of the past century, as well as some of the endemic dilemmas of the human condition. It is dense with wisdom and insight, and although several of the essays touch on Communist systems—especially their theoretical inspiration and foundation—their demise (or transformation) does not diminish the relevance of these essays.

Kolakowski's subjects include evil in history and human nature, the perils of the pursuit of utopia, the (still poorly understood) nature of totalitarianism, the differences and similarities between Nazism and communism, the relationship between Marxism and Communist (or state socialist) systems, genocide and its justifications, the problems of modernity and secularization, moral relativism and the religious roots of morality.

This volume will certainly help to settle the contentious issue of the relationship between Marxism and the political systems it had inspired and influenced, if not determined. Following the collapse of Soviet communism, an increasing number of Western intellectuals claimed that Marxism could not be held responsible for the failings of the Soviet Union (and similar systems) since the rulers of Communist states made no attempt to implement Marxism but merely used it as a legitimating device, a smokescreen. Far fewer argued that it was the very attempt to realize the unrealizable ideals of Marxism that finally led to the moral, material, and political crisis and collapse of these systems.

There was, indeed, a close connection between Marxist theories and ideals and the nature of "actually existing" Communist systems, even if Karl Marx could not have anticipated what part his ideas would play in the creation of political-social arrangements and policies which probably would not have pleased him. We may debate the precise nature of this connection, but its existence can hardly be disputed. Kolakowski rightly believes that the attempts to implement the basic values of Marxism generated repressive political organizations—or more generally, that Marxist theory implied consequences that

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were "incompatible with [Marx's] ostensible value judgments." That is to say, there were numerous, destructive unintended consequences of these attempts.

Thus, Marx's anticipation of the benefits of the nationalization of the means of production found expression in the policies of all existing Communist systems (no gap here between theory and practice), and these blessings failed to materialize. Marx's belief in the unification of human societies essential for "liberation" was another example of an ideological imperative with unfortunate consequences: As Kolakowski puts it, "There is no known technique apart from despotism whereby the unity of society can be achieved."

Insofar as the residual appeals of socialism remain rooted in nostalgic evocations of community and solidarity—in contrast with the social isolation supposedly created by capitalism, but in fact resulting from the broader processes of modernization—Kolakowski's observations go to the heart of the matter:

> Socialism as a social or moral philosophy was based on the ideal of human brotherhood, which can never be implemented by institutional means. There has never been, and there will never be, an institutional means of making people brothers. Fraternity under compulsion is the most malignant idea devised in modern times; it is the perfect path to totalitarian tyranny.

These writings also clarify the nature and origins of totalitarianism and the relationship between its major versions. Nazism was more "authentic" than the Communist varieties. As Kolakowski points out, "The gap between façade and reality was small—as a rule, the ideology made its true intentions brutally plain." He also writes:

> A remarkable aspect of Nazism was its overtness. It had very few elements of a mendacious façade. It displayed its goals openly and uttered them aloud . . . The importance of this aspect of Nazism is brought into relief when it is confronted. . . . with communism in its Stalinist period. . . . In contrast to Nazism Stalinism was all façade. It exploited . . . all the ideological instruments of the socialist, humanist, internationalist, universalist tradition. It never preached conquest only liberation from oppression.

Throughout his career, Kolakowski has been preoccupied with timeless human dispositions, which find a variety of expressions, including the rise and fall of Communist systems and the utopian aspirations they used to embody. With Isaiah Berlin, he has appreciated the troublesome human proclivity for pursuing incompatible, mutually exclusive goals and values, such as freedom and equality, individualism and integration into a community, competitiveness and compassion, consumerism and the love of nature, rational, scientific problem-solving and the need for nonrational self-transcendence.

Adding to these paradoxes, "communism demanded both blind obedience and the recognition that it was a rational interpretation of the world." There was, at the heart of all such longings, a hope that all conflicts between the personal and social, or the private and the public realm, could be eliminated—a hope bolstered by the craving for "totality" and "wholeness."

Kolakowski is well aware that human nature presents insurmountable obstacles to the fulfilment of such utopian fantasies: "It is in the very constitution of humanity that our wants have no definite limits. . . . Without a consciousness of limits . . . any attempt to limit our wants will result in terrible frustration and aggression."

As both a scholar of religion and a believer, Kolakowski is in a good position to identify the source of such longings in religious needs unmet by conventional religious institutions that have been undermined by modernity.

Kolakowski never ceased to be impressed by the attitudes of many Western, especially American, intellectuals who cannot relinquish the conviction that their society is far more contemptible than most others, and who remain persuaded that capitalism is the root of most evil in the world. It is these convictions which led to the durable double standards of such intellectuals who are "fervent moralists in some cases and Realpolitikers . . . in others depending on political circumstances." Another familiar double standard is found in the insistence that "anything that happens within the 'capitalist system' is by definition the product of capitalism; [but] anything bad that happens in the 'socialist system' is by the same definition the product of the same capitalism."

Kolakowski is unique among contemporary social philosophers and intellectuals in recognizing and confronting the notion of evil: "[E]vil is a real characteristic of life and . . . we carry in us a kind of moral intuition that enables us to recognize it as such." He also writes: "Evil . . . is not contingent, it is not the absence or deformation, or the subversion of virtue . . . but a stubborn and unredeemable fact."

Neither reform, nor revolution, nor education, nor material progress will eradicate "the evil in us." Such a tragic view of life is alien to Americans, products of a culture of high expectations, optimism, and good cheer, and inclined to believe that all good things are compatible and all problems have a solution. Kolakowski's belief in natural law and "moral intuition" sets him apart from most modern, secular intellectuals, including those who may share his awareness of the problems created by secularization and modernization. They may agree with him that a pragmatic or purely functional morality is inadequate:

> Mankind . . . would not survive if the only instrument to prevent us from following our desires and indulging our passions was the fear of legally inflicted suffering. . . . To be totally free from religious heritage or historical tradition is to situate oneself in a void. . . . The utopian faith in man's self-inventive capabilities, the utopian hope of unlimited perfection, may be the most efficient instrument of suicide human culture has ever invented. ♦

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Revolts of the Masses

Revolutions make history, and vice versa.

BY DAVID AIKMAN

The 20th century was, among other things, the Jurassic Park era of revolution. Painful, savage, and ultimately tragic experiments at wrenching humankind by force into egalitarian utopia was tried in country after country, invariably with the same brutal, and unsuccessful, results. These efforts were led by cold-hearted and single-minded men, each of whom seemed obsessed by something other than empirical logic, let alone common sense. What was it?

History's Locomotives
Revolutions and the Making of the Modern World
by Martin Malia
Yale, 360 pp., $30

In this brilliant and comprehensive work, Martin Malia, who died before the book's publication and taught most recently at the University of California at Berkeley, attempts to answer that question. He succeeds impressively. The title came from a remark of Karl Marx that revolutions were "the locomotives of history." The entire concept of revolution, Malia demonstrates persuasively, is a European invention. It first came to life in its modern form, one that he describes as "a generalized revolt against an Old Regime," in 1789 in France. It acquired what Malia regards as its "final form" in 1917, in Russia. After this, though Soviet power brought "revolutionary" (*viz.* Communist party-led) regimes to power all over Eastern Europe, all subsequent revolutionary successes occurred in agrarian, backward societies, and many of these in Asia. Indeed, Marxism-Leninism developed into a "cult of revolution," a quasi-metaphysical belief in the socially redemptive power of violent social change.

Historians before Malia, to be sure, rejected the simplistic notion that the prototypical "revolt against the Old Regime" in France sprung mainly from the combination of deteriorating economic conditions and social and political ideas critical of the Old Order: What might be called the "economic-slump-plus-Enlightenment-ideas" theory of political change. With great illumination, Malia uncovers the seedbed of European revolutionary sentiment in the millenarian and apocalyptic heresies of late medieval and early modern Europe.

He begins his detailed study with the Hussite rebellion of Bohemia during 1415-1436. In the Taborites, an apocalyptic Hussite community that developed an egalitarian socialist base and a formidably successful revolutionary army (they defeated the mounted knights who came against them with the unique combination of circled wagons and early artillery), Malia sees in many ways the prototype of revolutionary change in Europe thereafter: popular discontent and inflammatory visions of apocalyptic events and millennial changes. Later, in the pattern established by the Taborites, revolutions usually established a revolutionary regime, crescendoed to a paroxysm of violence, and then, after disillusionment and desire for moderation, experienced a "Thermidor," the displacement of the original revolutionary leadership and revolutionary goals.

Malia examines this pattern of revolution in the upheavals created by the rise of European Protestantism. He describes the Reformation itself as "revolutionary" because it divided Latin Christendom into two antagonistic blocs. But he raises interesting questions. The peasant revolt of Thomas Müntzer of 1525, he says, was "the largest and most radical social movement to occur anywhere in Europe before the French Revolution." Yet it was put down by the German princes, with Martin Luther's consent. Why was that? And why, he also asks, did the Dutch rebellion on the whole succeed—though the end result was a draw rather than a decisive defeat of Catholic Spain—and the French Protestant movement fail?

In 1566 the Huguenots seemed on the point of taking over France, yet they were turned back. They failed, notes Malia, to capture the monarchy and they were unable to complete their conquest when their most prominent leader, Henry of Navarre, an aspirant to the French throne, converted to Catholicism with the famous quip, "Paris is worth a mass." As for Müntzer, whom Friedrich Engels considered a predecessor of Marx, Malia notes that he was strikingly lacking in political and social goals and remained to the end primarily theological in his interests.

When discussing what he calls "the classic Atlantic revolutions," Malia notes that the English, even after Parliament's war on the king began in 1642, thought of their protest as a struggle to "restore" lost liberties rather than to overturn the Old Order in its entirety. True, there were radical fringe elements like the Diggers and Levellers; but these, Malia notes, have acquired their latter-day fame from the interest in them demonstrated by Marxist historians such as the late British scholar Christopher Hill. (Malia tartly quotes the Soviet historian Mikhail Pokrovsky to the effect that "history is politics projected onto the past.")

As for the American Revolution, as Malia notes, most historians agree that it was not a classic revolution—its social aspirations were limited and it failed to "devour its children." On the

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other hand, Malia says that it was "revolutionary" in that it set in motion revolutionary aspirations that are still current all over the world. Yet Malia almost glosses over perhaps the profoundest point about the American Revolution: Its worldview was "at variance with European Enlightenment optimism." Americans thought that, tempted by political power, human beings would likely turn wicked. It was natural of them to think that. By the end of the 18th century European culture was profoundly secular, and American culture was still overwhelmingly Christian.

Then came the French Revolution, of which the 24-year-old William Wordsworth wrote, "Bliss it was in that dawn to be alive, to be young was very heaven." Of course, it wasn't bliss for the 20,000 or so Frenchmen and women guillotined during the Terror of 1794. Yet the French Revolution accomplished something without which none of the 20th-century revolutions would have taken their peculiar, violent courses: the abstraction and universalizing of human rights. In France the slogan was "liberty, equality, fraternity," but over time the unifying aspiration of all revolutions was to become egalitarianism.

As for the "final form" of European revolution, October 1917, Malia suggests that Marxism came to Russia primarily because Russian intellectuals "needed a new theory of revolution" after the collapse of the Populist movement of the 1870s. There was never a workers' seizure of power in Russia, Malia asserts: "What triumphed in October," he says, "was not a social class of flesh-and-blood workers but a political party of ideologues purporting to incarnate the workers' revolutionary consciousness."

Readers should be warned that *History's Locomotives*, though brilliant, is not an easy read. Wide-ranging and almost encyclopedic in its historical references, it is also dense with references to prominent historians and sociologists and their works. There are also occasional phrases that might have been composed after a bedside overdose of Lenin: "Thus the Hussite proto-revolution, which fought out basically in religious terms, in fact furthered an untheoreticized constitutionalism." But that solecism is hardly typical of this book, which resonates long after it has been put down.

To come across the following sentence in reference to the great arc of European revolutionary thought is to encounter a mind of formidable originality: "Thus did the Western revolutionary tradition traverse the millennial trajectory from salvation religion as surrogate politics to salvation politics as surrogate religion."

The millennium? Salvation? Red October? Those Hussites set in motion more powerful forces than they anticipated. ♦

Gentleman at Arms

What the South and North can learn from General Robert E. Lee. BY EDWIN M. YODER JR.

When Lewis Powell, who was to become an esteemed Supreme Court justice, came as a freshman to Washington and Lee in the mid-1920s, he noticed a striking photograph in the hallway of his boarding house. The face of Robert E. Lee was instantly recognizable. But who, he asked, was the pretty little girl sitting on the General's knee? It was his landlady, as she herself was still there to explain.

Not everyone can boast of so close a degree of intimacy with the demigod of the Lost Cause, whose 200th birthday was observed this past month. Not even in Lexington, Virginia. But among those with ordinary claims mine are far from negligible. My great grandfather, the colonel of a Georgia unit in Wright's brigade, campaigned with Lee through most of the Civil War and was killed at the second battle of Deep Bottom on the James River in August 1864. There can be no better testament of loyalty. Years later, his fellow townsmen in the hamlet of Gibson, Georgia, raised a handsome obelisk in his memory in the town square and my uncle, a Navy surgeon, was there to speak of him as one who had opposed what he deemed "an unconstitutional invasion of his homeland."

Friends who have visited recently tell me that the monument is now neglected, choked by vines and weeds. *Sic transit gloria armis*, perhaps, though that isn't the end of the connection.

His granddaughter, my mother's elder sister, a generation older than she, thought so highly of Robert E. Lee that she put Lee in the names of all three of her sons, my cousins, and sent them all to Lexington, to imbibe the heritage at its source. Indeed, my aunt was so stern a guardian of that heritage that she fretted to see small children, black or white, frolicking about the Confederate monument on Broad Street in Augusta. (It was an attitude her sisters thought a bit extreme.)

Finally, I taught for ten years (1992-2002) at Washington and Lee University, whose journalism department boasts that Lee, as president, established the world's first chair of journalism. No one knows just why, though there are many theories. Perhaps Marse Robert was aware that southerners are often natural storytellers and

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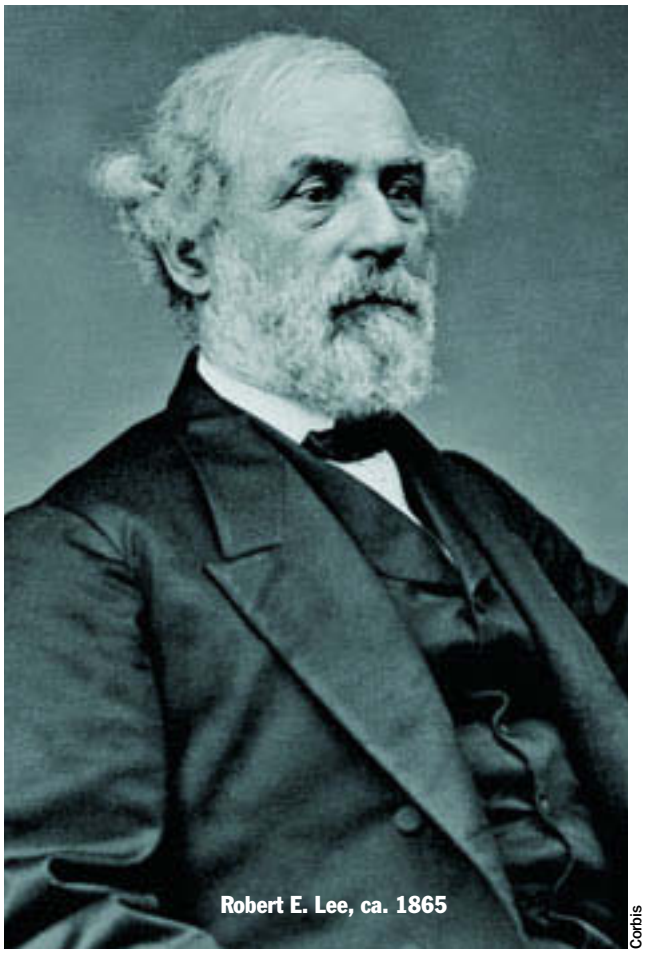
Robert E. Lee, ca. 1865

Corbis

aimed to sharpen their skills at a time when most reporters and editors emerged from printing shops. Or perhaps, as I liked to imagine, he was grateful to the reporters who had trumpeted his remarkable victories to the world. In that he was unlike his great adversaries, Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman, who loathed newspapermen. Loathed them so heartily that, according to Shelby Foote, they once danced a little jig on the banks of the Mississippi when they heard that a steamboat loaded with reporters had blown up. (The rumor, alas, was false.)

During my pleasant decade at Lee's university, I considered it a duty, in the light of this unearned legacy, to brush up on Lee. The most engaging account of the postwar Lee (who suffered from severe cardiovascular disease and lived only five years) is Charles Bracelen Flood's *Lee: The Last Years*. My colleague Holt Merchant, sometime chairman of the W&L history department, has forgotten more about Lee than most mortals will ever know. He tells me that Flood romanticizes too much for strict historical tastes. But I begged Holt not to discredit the best Lee story I know.

It is in Flood's book and goes as follows. When Lee, saddened and aged to judge by a famous Mathew Brady photograph, was living in Richmond between the surrender and the presidency of Washington College, he attended a service of Holy Communion at St. Paul's church—the place whence Jefferson Davis had been summoned one Sunday months earlier by the news that the Confederate lines had been broken, making Richmond's fall inevitable. On this Sunday, at the elevation of the host, a lone black man, possibly a former slave, advanced down the aisle and knelt at the communion rail. The congregation froze. Lee calmly arose from his pew, descended the aisle and knelt beside the newcomer, certifying with impeccable manners and Christian charity that times had changed.

According to Professor Merchant, the story is plausible but unverifiable. I hope it is true, because that gesture of Lee's is of iconic importance. He had been a staunch unionist before Virginia seceded, a foe of slavery and of secessionism, which he regarded as rash and revolutionary. With this magnanimous gesture, he intimated what the white South needed but would be slow, too slow, to learn: that the two races which had lived in such intimacy for so long were separated only by flawed ideas—a psychological, not a physical, distance.

It is, in any case, the Robert E. Lee of that transitional Sunday in Richmond that I choose to believe in—rather arbitrarily, for my own early tutelage in Lee was sparse. I can't recall that my Carolinian father, a keen historian, ever had anything of note to say about Lee. The silence is perhaps easily explained. His grandfather, chief of a county militia, thought enough of his Civil War record to put "Colonel, CSA" on his tombstone in Grace churchyard near Hickory, North Carolina. But he was a racial liberal before his time and, like Lee, abhorred slavery and believed in (and practiced, at some risk) the education of black people. These views descended intact to my father.

As I have noted, it was another story in my Georgia mother's family, such that my own orientation was contradictory. My conception of the general himself remained undernourished until, in my thirties, I read Douglas Southall Freeman's biography, which his worthy successor Emory Thomas calls "majestic." The word is no stretch. If all four volumes are too much for most attention spans these days, its flavor can be sampled in Freeman's epic treatment of the battle that broke Lee's heart but assured him immortality: Gettysburg.

Specifically, Freeman's account of Pickett's charge (really, Pettigrew's charge, since my fellow North Carolinian and Chapel Hillian commanded the majority of the valiant men on that stricken meadow), where he shows Lee lamenting, "too bad, oh, too bad!"—and, far more essentially, assuming full blame for the blunder. Had he evaded it, had he not recognized that James Longstreet's worries had been right, had he not assumed full responsibility, he would not be the Lee we revere today.

I imagine that many today would find Freeman's Lee a period piece. But it is infused not merely with Freeman's eloquence and historical craftsmanship, but with that conviction of the centrality of character that animates all

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great biography: Boswell on Johnson, Trevelyan on Macaulay, Morley on Gladstone, Edel on Henry James—character in its full meaning.

But what part of Lee's character do we mean; for he contained many? In Lexington, still haunted in every byway by Lee's ghost, they tell this story: A lady, seeing the general on horseback on Main Street, approached, tugging her small boy along.

"General," she called, "might you say a brief word of wisdom to my little son?"

The general reined up and removed his hat. "Madam," he said from the height of Traveller, "*tell him that he must deny himself.*" The vignette epitomizes the stern and ascetic Lee, the Lee called in one book "the marble man." A man made marble by others, to be sure, though not without truth. Like his lifelong idol George Washington, Lee knew what it was like to be deficient in fatherly care; and like Washington, he had a precocious sense of responsibility. His father, the famous, distinguished, and mischievous "Light Horse Harry" Lee, had run away when Lee was a small boy, leaving his wife and children embarrassed and destitute, far fallen from the magnificent vistas of Stratford Hall.

I myself like the less austere Lee. But the point is obviously that the many Lees noted at the turn of his third century suggest our human capacity for projection. We find in him what we look for, as in all monumental figures. Lee took Washington as his model, but we may be sure it wasn't Washington the foxhunter who liked his toddy, or the bon vivant or splendid dancer or great horseman; it was the self-denying Washington who had set aside vanity and power and given up his sword when he could have been a king. Similarly, Harry Turtledove's amusing novel *The Guns of the South*, has Lee, victorious in the Civil War, defeating the racist Nathan Bedford Forrest for the Confederate presidency on a platform of emancipation.

And the projection continues. More than 40 years ago my wife and I had arranged one fall weekend to meet close friends in Lexington, a convenient halfway point between Washington and Greensboro, North Carolina, where we then lived. Before setting off for the mountains, we paid a brief visit to Lee Chapel, which our friends had not seen. As we stood before Edward Valentine's evocative recumbent statue—often mistaken for a sarcophagus but, by Mrs. Lee's wish, the general sleeping on the battlefield—our friends, New Englanders, must have wondered what was up.

In what spirit were we making this pilgrimage? Was it obeisance before a saint's shrine, like Becket's at Canterbury? (After all, General and Mrs. Lee are memorialized there in a window as "gathered with thy saints, in glory everlasting.") Was it furtive homage to the Lost Cause? We were amused in retrospect, since for us it was a merely historical moment, not charged with any special veneration beyond the decorum due the great dead.

On the day of the recent birthday observance, a reporter wrote that "there is a new move to reevaluate Lee and his legacy. . . . As the South has become more racially and ethnically diverse . . . perhaps [the region] doesn't need Lee so much anymore." That journalistic dismissal gets the matter 180 degrees wrong. The more various and prosperous the South becomes, the more we shall need Lee as a compass—whether as warrior (who said with uncanny candor and insight, "It is a good thing that war is so terrible, otherwise we should grow to love it too much") or as secular saint, educator, or some other epitome of our mixed human qualities.

Against an age glancing compulsively over its shoulder for fear of political incorrectness, Lee will continue to resonate with us and rectify our wanderings. What we see in him is necessarily a part of ourselves, as large or small as we choose to make it. ♦

Keaton on Film

A 'vivid performer' and versatile actress.

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

Diane Keaton has been a major presence in the movies for 35 years now. She is remarkable not only for her longevity as a star—she is the name above the title in the new comedy *Because I Said So*, which opened on February 2—but for her ability to perform with equal intensity in both comedies and dramas. It was in a single year, 1972, that she emerged as a comic and dramatic actress to reckon with—first playing the deliciously neurotic spouse of Woody Allen's best friend in the hilarious *Play It Again, Sam*, and then essaying the naive WASP who falls for Mafia heir Michael Corleone in the Best Picture Ever Made (I refuse to mention the movie's name, because if you don't know it already, you should be ashamed of yourself).

Because I Said So
Directed by Michael Lehmann

Only five years later, she gave one of the indelible screen performances as the stammering, shimmering title character, the emblem of 1970s American womanhood, in *Annie Hall*. That was in 1977, when she also offered a heartbreaking portrait of a lonely teacher of deaf children whose desperate promiscuity

John Podhoretz, a columnist for the New York Post, *is* THE WEEKLY STANDARD*'s movie critic.*

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leads to her murder in *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*.

Throughout her singular career, Keaton has gone years without doing anything of note, or even doing less than noteworthy work—as happened when she seemed to fade into the woodwork as the supportive spouse of Steve Martin's *Father of the Bride* in two soporific films. And then, suddenly, she'll emerge from obscurity with two barrels blazing as she did in 1972 and 1977. In 1996, for example, she was utterly delightful as one of the dumped women in *The First Wives Club* (she was the Connecticut matron who "supervised" the washing of her husband's shorts) and utterly devastating as a self-sacrificing daughter suffering silently with cancer in *Marvin's Room*. Her co-star in *Marvin's Room* was Meryl Streep, the only other American actress who can wear the two masks of Janus with equal authority. Keaton blew Streep off the screen.

Now if you were to ask 100 people who is the greatest living film actress, chances are 90 would say Streep, while the other 10 votes would be scattered among various Swanks and Kidmans and Blanchetts. It's unlikely anyone would mention Diane Keaton, even though she's universally beloved, because there's something not-quite-actressy about her. She doesn't do accents. She doesn't wear transfiguring makeup. She giggles the same way in a comedy or a drama. She doesn't labor to make you forget you're watching Diane Keaton. She is the least pretentious performer imaginable.

And yet a great film actress is exactly what she is, and not only because she is in very august company as the star of movies produced in four successive decades. Keaton is among the most vivid performers the cinema has ever produced. She commands attention effortlessly but without a hint of Streep's intimidating grandeur or Nicole Kidman's ice-cold grandiosity. She does not fear looking ridiculous. She rather seems to crave it. Back in 1973, in *Sleeper*, she and Woody Allen did an amazing *pas de deux* of slapstick and vaudeville double-talk as they attempted to hijack the nose of a dead fascist dictator in the middle of a cloning procedure (don't ask). There's a running gag in the new *Because I Said So* in which Keaton repeatedly drops, falls into, or smashes her face into a newly frosted cake. There aren't many sexagenarians who can handle the physical demands of slapstick, but Keaton is as good at it as she was in her mid-20s.

Getty Images / Kevin Winter

Diane Keaton at the premiere of 'Because I Said So'

The cake bit isn't really that funny, largely because *Because I Said So* has been directed with staggering incompetence by a has-been hipster named Michael Lehmann (who can't decide whether the three romances he shows us in the movie take place over the course of two weeks or two years, with the result that much of what we're seeing makes no emotional or dramatic sense). But Keaton throws herself into the slapstick with total abandon, as she does every other aspect of *Because I Said So*, an unholy mess of a picture that is nonetheless irresistible because of her. As the meddling mother of three grown daughters, Keaton's character imposes her will on her offspring not through anger and rage but with overzealous enthusiasm. She's less a Sophie Portnoy and more a crazily peppy tour guide at a theme park, and while Keaton's take on the Mommy Monster isn't entirely believable, it's still immensely entertaining.

Keaton is at her best playing women who are fools for love—women who give everything of themselves and never really get anywhere near enough back. That sort of self-sacrifice is usually the stuff of tear-jerking melodrama. Keaton shows us not just the suffering caused by love but the utter, crazed joy of it, too. It's a kind of truth no other American actress has ever come close to embodying, and it's a significant accomplishment in the annals of cinema. ♦

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U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said Friday that she dislikes being "all alone on the court" nearly a year after the retirement of Sandra Day O'Connor. . . . Of herself and O'Connor, the court's first female justice, Ginsburg said: "We have very different backgrounds. We divide on a lot of important questions, but we have had the experience of growing up women and we have certain sensitivities that our male colleagues lack."

—Associated Press

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE

To: Sam, Steve, Mrs. Ginsburg, Tony, Nino, Dave, John Paul, Clarence
From: John R
Re: Schedule for Week of January 28-February 4

Monday, Jan. 29
12:00 p.m. sharp – Bus leaves Supreme Court for Washington Auto Show, Convention Center.

Tuesday, Jan. 30
11 a.m. – Oral arguments: *Michigan* v. *Gearloose.*
12:30 p.m. – Lunch at The Palm: It's Sirloin Week! (Buy 1 Get 1 Free)
4:30 p.m. – Reception for visiting Dallas Cowboys cheerleaders, Texas Bar Association, etc. SCOTUS conference room.
8:30 p.m. – Poker at Stevens condo. Alito brings dip.

Wednesday, Jan. 31
11 a.m. – Oral arguments: *United States* v. *Abdul Mohammed al-Rachid Hussein et al.*
12:30 p.m. – Bag lunch in my chambers, BYOB.
1:15 p.m. – Leave in bus for Arlington.
1:30 p.m. – Paintball Tournament: SCOTUS vs. House Judiciary Committee minority staff.
3:30 p.m. – Post-game snack at sports bar recommended by Souter.
5:00 p.m. – Bus returns to Supreme Court.
7:00 p.m. – Bus leaves for Monster Wheels Rally at Washington Coliseum. Roberts to receive King of the Road Award, ceremony during intermission.

Thursday, Feb. 1
11 a.m. – Oral arguments: *DiMaggio Estate* v. *Mr. Coffee Group LLP*
12:30 p.m. – Lunch in my office with Stephanie March and friend (she played ADA Alexandra Cabot on *Law & Order: SVU*).
6:30 p.m. – Bus leaves for Washington Hilton.
7:00 p.m. – Reception for UNICEF. Photo op with Special Ambassador Angelina Jolie. Kennedy will introduce.
9:30 p.m. – Bus leaves for the Eager Beaver on 14th Street: It's Amateur Night!
2:30 a.m. – Bus returns to Supreme Court.

Friday, Feb. 2
12:30 p.m. – Lunch with Arlo Feigenbaum, Esq., general counsel of National Basketball Association; Tayshaun Prince (Detroit Pistons); Shaquille O'Neal (Miami Heat).
3:00 p.m. – National Prostate Cancer Awareness Week. Free screening and information, SCOTUS conference room.
7:00 p.m. – Movie night. *The Great Escape* (1963) starring Steve McQueen, SCOTUS auditorium.

Saturday, Feb. 3
12:00 p.m. – Bus leaves SCOTUS for Consumer Electronics Mini-Expo, Convention Center.

Sunday, Feb. 4
3:00 p.m. – Super Bowl party at my house. Thomas brings chips, Breyer brings beer, Alito brings dip.

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